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THE INDIAN ANNUAL REGISTER

JANUARY—JUNE 1943

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA 1943	1
India Office	1
Government of India	1
Government of Bengal	1
Government of Punjab	3
Government of Sind	3
Government of Orissa	4
Government of Assam	4
Government of Madras	4
Government of Bombay	5
Government of United Provinces	5
Government of Bihar	5
Government of Central Provinces	6
Government of N. W. Frontier Province	6
Federal Court of India	6
Bengal Judicial Department	6
Bombay Judicial Department	7
Madras Judicial Department	7
Bihar & Orissa Judicial Department	7
C. P. & Berar Judicial Department	7
Punjab Judicial Department	8
United Provinces Judicial Department	8
Chief Court of Oudh—Lucknow	8
Chief Court of Sind—Karachi	8
INDIAN STATES (with salutes)	8
" " (without salutes)	18
CHRONICLE OF EVENTS	25
January 1943	25
February 1943	30
March 1943	38
April 1943	47
May 1943	53
June 1943	59
NOTES ON INDIAN HISTORY	
The Rigveda	66
Unitary Indian Empire	67
Chandragupta and Asoka	68
Gupta Dynasty	68
Mediaeval India	69
The Mahammedan Rule	70
The British Rule	70

INDIA IN HOME POLICY	75
India's detachment from World affairs	75
Entry of Japan changed all this	75
Conditions of famine in parts of India	76
Linlithgow Government's short-sightedness	77
Memory of 1769-70 famine	78
Denial Policy & Bengal famine	79
Bengal's food position	79
Surplus & deficit controversy	79
Government Enquiry Committee's Report	80
All-India position perilously unbalanced	80
Play with statistical figures	81
Hoarding & Government Control	81
The Plea of Provincial Autonomy	82
Obstinacy and selfishness of provinces	83
Profiteering by Governments	83
Profiteering and Moral Degradation	83
Muhd. Reza Khan & Provincial Autonomy	84
Macaulays Verdict	84
Sir William Hunter's opinion	85
Warren Hasting's opinion	85
William Bolt's judgment	85
Cyclic Renewals of famine in India	85
The practice of olden times	86
The modern State specializes in Law & Order	86
The war and its necessities	86
Conditions in Britain and in the U. S. A.	87
Years of Malnutrition in India	88
Bureaucracy in the West & in India	89
British indifference to India's present famine	90
Fazlul Huq Ministry's record	90
Dr. Shyamaprosad Mukherjee's resignation	91
Forces that brought down the Fazlul Huq Ministry	91
What the Central Government did	92
Its attempt at misleading	92
Mr. Fazlul Huq's case	93
The Fazlul Huq Ministry spoke of a surplus	93
Under Central direction	94
Statistics and hunger	95
Provinces & States did not help Central Government	95
Why the Linlithgow Govt. tolerated this non-co-operation	95
Fazlul Huq Ministry & the Governor	96
The Nazimuddin Ministry & use of political patronage	97
Their helpless imitation of the Central bureaucracy	97
Why did the Muslim League accept the Ministry	98
Workings of "denial policy"	99
Effectiveness of "denial policy"	99
Purchase of foodgrains by Government and others	100
How Government agents worked	101
The case of wheat & rice purchase	101
United Kingdom Commercial Corporation	102
How Government Agents depressed the Market	102

Foodgrains rotting in Government's care	...	102
Exploiters and profiteers of Indian birth	...	103
Cloth famine—cloth makers & dealers of India	...	103
"Standard cloth" scandal	...	104
People by their listlessness helped profiteering	...	105
Administration & Exploitation inter-linked	...	106
Gandhiji's Struggle against these	...	106
His latest fast & its reaction on opinion	...	107
Gandhiji's faith and mission in life	...	108
Congress and Axis powers	...	109
Wider ramifications of deadlock in India	...	109
Differences amongst Indians—the stumbling block	...	110
The demand for separate "sthanas" in India	...	111
"Non-accession" clause in the Cripps declaration	...	112
Example of Soviet Russia & Britain	...	112
Simplicity of Soviet thought and practice	...	113
Exchange of population "living space"	...	114
Difficulties in their way—case of Assam	...	115
Other strands of political thought amongst Muslims	...	116
Mr. Jinnah's stagye way	...	116
Poet Iqbal's & Rahamat Ali's "Pakisthan"	...	117
Other Separatist conceits & ambitions	...	118
Against historic development	...	118
For capture of political power	...	119
Financial Exploitation of poor	...	120
India's defence expenditure	...	120
India a creditor Country—use of her "sterling balances"	...	121
Mr. Jinnah's Invitation to Gandhiji	...	123
Mr. Jinnah backs out	...	124
"Die, but do not retreat"	...	124
What the German forces achieved	...	125
What they learnt from the Russians	...	125
German forces Islanded in Russia	...	126
First half of 1943 shows German stability	...	126
The food front in the Soviet land	...	126
Germany shortening her lines	...	127
And using her 'released' divisions in 'Fortress Europe'	...	127
Allied victories during January—June 1943	...	128
Allied talk about invasion of Europe	...	128(a)
Speculations and facts	...	128(a)
Germany's central position—a great advantage...	...	128(b)
Air bombings on Germany—an experiment	...	128(b)
How effective in destruction	...	128(c)
Priority of attack on Germany	...	128(c)
Mr. Churchill tries to justify this strategy	...	128(d)
Jungle war and other difficulties	...	128(e)
Supply difficulties and others	...	128(e)
In the Pacific front	...	128(f)
Possibilities opened by Siberian bases	...	128(g)
War Weariness—a war weapon	...	128(h)
Japan's appeal to Pan-Asiatic sentiment and interests	...	128(h)
The case of Phillippines & Burma	...	128(i)

Japan is having time to organize her conquests...	...	128(i)
Japan's attempt to break China's "rice bowl"	...	128(j)
China's fear of Japan's political strategy	...	128(k)
"Miracle" in China—an explanation	...	128(k)
China's hope of the future	...	128(l)
Allied strategy in Pacific area	...	128(l)
Sir Archibald Wavell as war chief	...	128(m)
His "Far East Asia" record	...	128(n)
Sir Archibald as a politician	...	128(n)
The British Press on Sir Archibald	...	128(o)
Building a new Character for him	...	128(p)
An old familiar technique	...	128(p)
THE COUNCIL OF STATE		130
List of Members	...	130
PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL	...	131
BUDGET SESSION--NEW DELHI--15TH. FEBRUARY TO 3RD. APRIL 1943		131
Railway Budget for 1943-44	...	131
Changes in E.P.T. Act urged	...	132
Decontrolling of prices	...	132
General discussion of Ry. Budget	...	132
Ordinances during war	...	133
Amendment of India Act 1935	...	134
Control & Distribution of Foodstuffs	...	135
Accumulation of Sterling Resources in U. K.	...	135
General Discussion of Budget	...	135'137
Rationing of paper	...	138
Official & Non-Official Bills	...	139
Indian Finance Bill introduced	...	139
Communal Ratio in Govt. Services	...	139
Laws for relief to Agriculturists	...	139
Condition of Assam Tea-garden workers	...	139
Indian Finance Bill debate	...	140
The Tobacco Excise Bill	...	143
Indian Tea control Amend. Bill	...	144
Assam Tea Labour	...	144
Visit to security prisoners	...	144
Hindu Succession Bill	...	145
Military Prisons Bill	...	145
THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY		146
List of Members	...	146
PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY	...	148
BUDGET SESSION--NEW DELHI--10TH. FEBRUARY TO 2ND APRIL, 1943	...	148
Shortage of small coins	...	148
Paper control order	...	148
Whipping of students in Sind	...	149
Sales of silver	...	149
Defence of India Rules	...	149
Pice Pieces	...	149

Minting of coins for other countries	...	...	150
Brothels in Calcutta	...	...	150
Government and the Press			150
Air raid casualties			150
War position in the East			150
Jap Air raids			151
Alleged Police excesses			151
Inadequacy of dearness allowances			153
Railway Budget for 1943-44			153
Food grains situation		156,159,	163
Release of Mahatma Gandhi urged			153
Restriction on Delhi Newspaper			153
Police and Military excesses			160
Federal Govt. as solution of deadlock			160
Prohibition of Textile Export			161
General Discussion of Ry. Budget			162
Voting on Railway Budget demands			165
Wagon Allotment			165
Rates and Fares			166
Grievances of Railway servicemen			166
Appeals of Railway employees			167
Recognition of Muslim Worker's Union			167
Extension to Railway employees			168
Quota for Muslim employees			168
Railway Supplementary Grants			168
Indian Railways Act			168
Aligarh University Amend. Bill			168
Financial Statement for 1943-44			169
Changes in Railway convention			176
Penal Code Amend. Bill			176
Coffee market amend. bill			177
Indian army amend. bill			177
Reciprocity Bill *			177
General Discussion of Budget			177
Voting on Budget Demands			180
Repressive policy of Government			180
Utilisation of sterling balances			181
Press Censorship			182
Dearness allowance			183
Demands for more sessions			183
National war front			184
Indian seamen			185
Urdu language in broadcasting			185
Martial Law in Sind			185
Muslims in supply department			186
Agriculture in India			186
Debate on the Finance Bill			187
Tobacco Excise Bill			196
Railway convention resolution			197
Tea Control amend. bill			197
Hindu Intestate Succession Bill			198, 201

Detenus and Political Prisoners	...	...	199
Hindu Inter-caste marriage Bill	...	...	200
Leaders refused to interview Gandhi	...	...	212
THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY			230
List of Members	...	...	203
PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY	...	...	205
BUDGET SESSION—CALCUTTA—12TH FEBRUARY TO 29TH MARCH 1943	...	...	205
Dr. Mukherjee's statement on his resignation	...	...	205
Present Indian Deadlock	...	...	205
Release of politicals	...	...	206
Collective fines	...	...	206
Appeal for unity	...	...	207
Release of Mahatma Gandhi	...	...	208
The Midnapore incidents	...	...	208
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	210
The Finance Bill 1943	...	...	210, 216
Debate on Food Supply	...	...	211, 213
Detenus in Bengal	...	...	212
Bengal Security prisoners	...	...	212
Minister's advice to Governor	...	...	212
No truth in enemy radio report	...	—	213
Small coins	...	...	213
Number of detenus	...	...	214
Ministers not free agents—Mr. Huq's statement	...	...	214
Casualties in August disturbances	...	...	215, 216
Election of Speaker	...	...	215
Deaths in Midnapore cyclone disaster	...	...	215
The Vagrancy Bill	...	...	215
Convictions of August disturbances	...	...	215
Special Judges ordinances	...	...	215
Bengal Finance Bill, 1943	...	...	216
Casualties in August disturbances	...	...	216
Non-Official Resolutions	...	...	216
Bengal Finance Bill 1943	...	...	217
Debate on Food Situation	...	...	217
The Midnapore Incidents	...	...	217
Allowance to Detenus	...	...	218
Adjudication of Labour Disputes	...	...	218
Govt. Decisions on the Flood Report	...	...	218
Governor's Rejection of Premier's Advice	...	...	219
Fixation of Acreage for Jute Cultivation	...	...	220
Detention of Legislators	...	...	220
Censure Motion on the Ministry	...	...	220
Incidents in Noakhali	...	...	221
Women killed during shooting practice	...	...	222
Black Market & Profiteering	...	...	222
Punish the Hoarders	...	...	223
People wanted change	...	...	223
Mr. Huq Resigns—His Statement	...	...	224
Application of Sec. 93—Official Statement	...	—	228

THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL	...	...	229
List of Members	...	...	229
PROCEEDINGS OF THE BENGAL COUNCIL	...	...	229
BUDGET SESSION—CALCUTTA—12TH FEBRUARY TO 2ND APRIL 1943	...	...	229
Condolence Resolution	...	...	229
Budget for 1943-44	...	...	230
Funds for Food Grains	...	...	230
Mahatma Gandhi's Release urged	...	...	230
Excess Demands for 1940-41	...	...	231
General Discussion on Budget	...	...	231
Supplementary Demands Discussed	...	...	233
Election of the President	...	...	234
Non-Agricultural Tenancy Act	...	...	234
Waste Land Reclamation	...	...	234
Supply & Control of Foodstuffs	...	...	235
Debate on the Flood Commission Report	...	...	238
Expenditure on Civil Defence	...	...	239
Improvement of Sailors' Condition	...	...	239
Salt Manufacture in Bengal	...	...	239
Debate on Food Situation	...	...	239
THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	...	...	241
List Of Members	...	...	241
PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY	...	...	242
BUDGET SESSION—SHILLONG—8TH. TO 27TH. MARCH 1943	...	...	242
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	242
General Discussion on Budget	...	...	242
Court of Wards Bill	...	...	243
Nurses' Registration Bill	...	...	243
Alleged Police Excesses	...	...	243
Black Market Activities	...	...	244
Security Prisoners in Assam	...	...	244
The Finance Bill 1943	...	...	245
Supplementary Demands	...	...	245
Surplus Rice in Assam	...	...	245
THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL	...	...	245
BUDGET SESSION—SHILLONG—9TH. TO 13TH. MARCH 1943	...	...	245
Rice Position in Assam	...	...	245
General Discussion on Budget	...	...	246
THE ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	...	...	247
List of Members	...	...	247
PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY	...	...	247
BUDGET SESSION—CUTTACK—25TH. FEB. TO 24TH. MARCH 1943	...	...	247
Official Bills Passed	...	...	247
Budget for 1943-44	...	...	247
General Discussion on Budget	...	...	248
Lathi Charge in Berhampore Jail	...	...	249
Legislators under Detention	...	...	249
Tactics of the Ministry	...	...	249
Legislators under Detention	...	...	249
Congress Leaders' Censure Motion	...	...	250

THE SIND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	...	...	251
List of Members	...	...	251
PROCEEDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY	...	...	251
BUDGET SESSION—KARACHI.—24TH. FEB. TO 6TH. March 1943			251
Budget-Statement for 1943-44	...	...	251
Fresh Taxation Proposals	...	...	252
Sind Hindu Women's Property Rights	...	...	252
General Discussion on Budget	...	...	252
Taxation Measures	...	...	253
Resolution on Pakistan	...	...	253
Budget Demands Passed	...	...	254
THE PUNJAB LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	...	...	255
List of Members	...	...	255
PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUNJAB ASSEMBLY	...	...	257
BUDGET SESSION—LAHORE—4TH. MARCH TO 25TH. MARCH 1943			257
Supplementary Estimates	...	...	257
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	257
Treatment of Detenus	...	...	258
Congress Detenus in Punjab	...	...	258
Wheat purchase for Central Govt.	...	...	259
Premier on his Delhi Speech	...	...	259
Public Accounts Committee Report	...	...	259
Fasting in Jail	...	...	260
Restriction on the Press	...	...	260
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY	...	...	261
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	261
THE GOVERNMENT OF UNITED PROVINCES	...	...	262
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	262
THE GOVERNMENT OF CENTRAL PROVINCES	...	...	263
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	263
THE GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR	...	...	263
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	263
THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS	...	...	264
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	264
THE GOVERNMENT OF N. W. Fr. PROVINCE	...	...	264
Financial Statement for 1943-44	...	...	264
Office of Adviser Terminated	...	...	264
THE ALL INDIA HINDU MAHASABHA	...	...	266
ALL INDIA COMMITTEE—CAWNPORE—1ST. JANUARY 1943			266
Office-Bearers for Ensuing Year	...	...	266
New Working Committee	...	...	266
Next Session at Amritsar	...	...	266
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—13TH. & 14TH. FEB. 1943			266
(1) Anxiety about Gandhi's Fast	...	...	266
(2) Condolence	...	...	267
(3) Jaipur Agitation	...	...	267
(4) Hindu Rights in Sind	...	...	267
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—9TH. MAY 1943	...		267
South African Anti-Indian Legislation	...	...	267
Mahasabha Accounts in Banks	...	...	268
Civil Suits Expenses Sanctioned	...	...	268

Mahila Conference	...	...	268
Action against Raja M. D. Seth	...	...	268
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—10TH. MAY 1948	...		268
Merger of Hindus in Muslims States	...	...	268
Hindu Intestate Succession Bill	...	...	268
Agra, Oudh and Bihar Awards Ratified	...	...	269
Pt. Neelkanath Das taken on the Working Committee	...	...	269
Resolution on Bengal Situation	...	...	269
Muslim League Activities	...	...	269
Intensive Programme	...	...	269
PUNJAB PROVINCIAL HINDU CONFERENCE			270
ANNUAL SESSION—LYALLPUR—30TH. APRIL, 1948	...		270
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	...	...	270
No more platitudes	...	...	270
Pakistan Opposed	...	...	270
Call for Unity	...	...	271
Crisis that faces Punjab	...	...	271
The Cause of Hindus	...	...	272
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—LYALLPUR—1ST. MAY 1948...			272
Release of Mahatma Gandhi	...	...	272
RESOLUTIONS—3RD. DAY—LYALLPUR—2ND. MAY 1948	...		273
Opposition to Pakistan	...	...	273
Dr. Mukherjee's Appeal to Punjab	...	...	273
THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE			274
MR. JINNAH'S REITERATION OF PAKISTAN DEMAND	...		274
Congress Resolution Criticised	...	...	274
Mahasabha Attitude	...	...	274
Reply to Mr. Amery	...	...	275
"No sign of change of heart in Congress"	...	...	275
DR. LATIF CRITICISES LEAGUE ATTITUDE	...	...	276
C. R. 's New Order	...	...	276
Angularities must go	...	...	277
COUNCIL MEETING—RESOLUTIONS—NEW DELHI—7TH. MARCH 1948			277
Mr. Jinnah elected President	...	...	277
Sind Pakistan Resolution Approved	...	...	277
Punjab Ministry Formation Discussed	...	...	277
Mr. Jinnah's Observations	...	...	278
Muslim Mass Contact	...	...	278
Sind Assembly Resolution on Pakistan Endorsed	...	...	278
OPEN SESSION OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE			279
30TH. SESSION—NEW DELHI—24TH. APRIL 1948	...		279
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	...	...	279
Appeal to Hindu Public	...	...	279
Bengal's Example	...	...	280
Hindu Muslim Differences	...	...	280
British Govt's Policy	...	...	281

National Govt's Policy	...	...	281
Gandhi invited to write	...	...	281
The South African Bill	...	...	283
Attitude to Federation	...	...	284
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—NEW DELHI—25TH. APRIL 1943			284
The South African Bill	...	...	284
Food Situation	...	...	285
Collective Fines	...	...	286
RESOLUTIONS—3RD. DAY—NEW DELHI—26TH. APRIL 1943			286
Execution of Pir Pagaro	...	...	286
Martial Law in Sind	...	...	286
Declaration regarding Sind	...	...	287
"Muslims will not accept Federation"	...	...	287
Punjab Premier's Support	...	...	288
Arab Independence	...	...	289
New Powers for President	...	...	289
Mr. Jinnah's Remarks	...	...	289
THE ALL INDIA MOMIN CONFERENCE			290
EIGHTH SESSION—NEW DELHI—26TH TO 28TH APRIL 1943			290
Presidential Address	...	...	290
RESOLUTION—2ND. DAY—NEW DELHI—27TH APRIL 1943			290
Pakistan Condemned	...	...	290
RESOLUTIONS—3RD. DAY—NEW DELHI—28TH. APRIL 1943			291
Complete Independence of India	...	...	291
Indian Interest in South Africa	...	...	291
Release of Political Prisoners	...	...	291
Swaraj cannot wait	...	...	291
WORKING COMMITTEE—CAWNPORE—19TH. TO 21st. JUNE 1943			392
Jinnah's Attitude condemned	...	...	292
National Govt. urged	...	...	292
Co-operation in War effort	...	...	292
THE ALL INDIA AHRAR COMMITTEE			315
CENTRAL COMMITTEE—SAHARANPUR—26TH. APRIL 1943			315
Statement of Policy about Indian Situation			315
THE ALL INDIA MAJLIS-I-AHRAR			293
COUNCIL MEETING—SAHARANPUR—29TH. APRIL 1943	...		293
Need for Peace & Mutual Confidence	...	...	293
Office Bearers	...	...	293
THE U. P. MAJLIS-I-AHRAR			293
ANNUAL SESSION—SAHARANPUR—27TH. APRIL 1943	...		293
Presidential Address	...	...	293
THE PUNJAB MAJLIS-I-AHRAR			293
Presidential Address—Lyallpur—31st. March 1943	...		293
THE ALL INDIA AKALI CONFERENCE			294
4th. Session—Bhowanigarh—14th. March 1943	...		294
Presidential Address	...	...	294

THE ALL INDIA AKHAND HINDUSTHAN CONFERENCE	295
ANNUAL SESSION—LAHORE—6TH. JUNE 1943	295
Presidential Address	295
AKALI CONFERENCE—RESOLUTIONS—LAHORE—7TH. JUNE 1943	296
Azad Punjab scheme supported & condemned	296
CENTRAL AKALI DAL—AKHAND HINDHUSTHAN CONFERENCE	297
Resolutions—Roomi—19TH. AND 20TH. JUNE, 1943	297
THE SHROMANI AKALI DAL	298
Committee Meetings—Amritsar—4th. & 5th. 5th. June 1943	298
THE ALL INDIA SIKH YOUTH CONFERENCE	298
ANNUAL SESSION—LAHORE—30TH. & 31ST. JANUARY 1943	298
Presidential Address	298
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—LAHORE—31ST. JANUARY 1943	299
Referendum on "Azad Punjab" Move	299
Formation of National Govt. urged	299
THE ALL INDIA NATIONALIST LEAGUE	300
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—13TH. FEBRUARY 1943	300
Release of Mahatma Gandhi urged	300
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—21ST. APRIL 1943...	305
Pakistan Condemned	300
Solution of Present Deadlock	301
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—27TH. APRIL 1943	301
Bengal Ministerial tangle	301
THE PUNJAB PROVINCIAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE	301
ANNUAL SESSION—LAHORE—21ST. JUNE 1943	
Mrs. Bameshuri Nehru's Speech	302
RESOLUTIONS	302
End Present Deadlock	302
Food Situation in the Country	362
Right to interview children	382
Hindu Intestate Succession Bill	303
Children's Aid Society	303
Dearness Allowance	303
Punjab Branch's Activities	303
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA CONGRESS	304
1ST. CONGRESS SESSION—BOMBAY—23RD. MAY 1943	304
Mr. Dange's Opening Speech	304
Disbandment of Communist International	304
PARTY CONVENTION—BOMBAY—26TH MAY 1943	305
Mr. P. C. Joshi's Address	305
Cripp's Mission	306
Gandhiji's Stand	306
India's Defence	306
Resolutions—Tributes to Martyrs	307

RESOLUTIONS—BOMBAY—31ST. MAY 1943	...	...	307
Formation of National Government	...	...	307
Right of Secession of Nationalities	...	...	308
Election of Office-Bearers	...	...	309
THE ALL INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE			309
28TH. SESSION—NEW DELHI—19TH. AND 20TH. MARCH 1943			309
Presidential Address	...	...	309
Tribute to Non-Party Leaders	...	...	109
Claims of Indian Christians	...	...	309
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—NEW DELHI—20TH. MARCH 1943			310
Round Table Conference Suggested	...	...	310
Release of Gandhi Urged	...	...	310
THE ALL INDIA HARIJAN CONFERENCE			311
NINTH SESSION—AMRITSAR—11TH AND 12TH APRIL 1943			311
Presidential Address	...	...	311
Resolutions	...	...	311
RESOLUTIONS—2ND DAY—AMRITSAR—12TH APRIL 1943			312
THE ALL INDIA KISAN CONFERENCE			312
RESOLUTIONS—BHAKNA—4TH APRIL 1943	...	...	312
Political Situation in the Country	...	...	312
Greetings to Chinese	...	...	313
Political Situation in India	...	...	313
Army of Works	...	...	314
THE COMMUNAL CONCORD CONFERENCE			316
Mr. Humayun Mirza's Address	...	...	316
THE ALL INDIA JAT CONFERENCE			318
31ST SESSION—LAHORE—27TH MARCH 1943	...	...	318
Proceedings & Resolutions	...	...	318
MAHATMA GANDHI'S FAST			319
India Government's Communique	...	...	319
Origin and Development of Movement	...	...	319
Circular of July '29	...	...	320
LINLITHGOW-GANDHI CORRESPONDENCE	...	...	320
Mr. Gandhi's Letter to Viceroy—New Year's Eve	...	...	320
Law Of Satyagraha	...	...	321
The Viceroy's Reply—January 13, 1943	...	...	322
Mr. Gandhi's Second Letter—January 19, 1943	...	...	322
Viceroy on Congress & the Disturbances	...	...	323
Mr. Gandhi's Third Letter—January 29, 1943	...	...	323
Lord Linlithgow's Reply—February 5th., 1943	...	...	324
Concerted Plan	...	...	325
Gandhi-Irwin Pact	...	...	325
Mr. Gandhi's Fourth Letter—February 7, 1943	...	...	326
Principle of Civil Disobedience	...	...	326
Annexures	...	...	327
Annexures 1—Mr. Gandhi's Letter—August, 1943	...	...	327
The Government Resolution	...	...	327
Congress Offer	...	...	328
Defence of India	...	...	328

The Declared Cause ...	329
Annexure II—The Viceroy's Reply—August 22, 1943 ...	329
Annexure III—Mr. Gandhi's Letter to the Secretary, Government of India (Home Dept.)—September 23, 1942 ...	329
SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM'S LETTER, FEBRUARY, 7th., 1943 ...	330
Mr. Gandhi's Reply—February 8th., 1943 ...	330
Sir Richard on Government's Position—February 9th., 1943 ...	330
Resignation of Viceroy's Executive Members ...	331
Government Communique ...	331
THE ALL PARTIES LEADERS' CONFERENCE ...	331
OPENING DAY—NEW DELHI—19TH. FEBRUARY, 1934 ...	331
Mr. Rajagopalachari's Address ...	331
Release will ease situation ...	332
Committee defeats resolution ...	332
SECOND DAY—NEW DELHI—20TH. FEBRUARY, 1943 ...	332
Sir T. B. Sapru's Speech ...	332
Adherence to Non-Violence ...	333
Resolution ...	333
Mr. Jayakar's Address ...	333
Need for Campaign in country ...	333
Resolution sent to Mr. Churchill & Mr. Amery ...	335
Viceroy's Reply ...	335
LEADERS' COMMUNIQUE TO PREMIER ...	335
Fast explained ...	335
Plea for release ...	336
Premier's Reply ...	336
Amery echoes the Premier ...	336
THE MAHATMA BREAKS HIS FAST ...	337
Dr. B. C. Roy on the fast ...	338
Dr. Roy on the significance of the fast ...	338
"Kept himself in tune with Infinity" ...	339
RELEASE OF MAHATMA GANDHI ...	339
THE ALL INDIA LEADERS' STATEMENT ...	339
Bombay—9th. and 10th. March, 1943 ...	339
LEADERS' MEMORANDUM TO VICEROY ...	340
"Gandhiji's help essential for restoring goodwill" ...	340
VICEROY'S REPLY TO THE MEMORANDUM ...	341
The August disturbances ...	341
"No wish on Mr. Gandhi's Part to go back" ...	342
"No suggestion of change of heart" ...	342
"Essential Parliament for a National Govt." ...	343
LEADERS URGE IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL ...	343
To investigate charges against the Congress ...	343
"Our Demand is for Justice" ...	343
A body of unchallengeable Impartiality urged ...	344
Govt. must seek moral basis for its actions ...	344
Continuance of Status Quo bodes ill ...	344
GANDHI WISHES TO SEE JINNAH ...	345
Government turn down request ...	345
Mr. Jinnah's speech recalled ...	345
Mr. Jinnah's comment on Govt. communique ...	345
Mr. Jinnah's Statement on letter reiterated ...	346

FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	347
SIXTEENTH SESSION—NEW DELHI—27TH. & 28TH. MARCH, 1943	347
Presidential Address	347
Proceedings and Resolutions	349
Transfer of power essential	349
India and Post-War Conference	349
Silver Sales	350
Allocation of Defence Expenditure	350
Utilisation of Sterling Balances	350
Post-War Reconstruction	351
Food Supply	351
RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—NEW DELHI—28TH. MARCH, 1943	352
Lease—Lend Supplies	352
Burma Indians	353
Indian Industries and Post-War Development	353
British Interests' move to secure safeguards	353
Activities of the U. K. O. C.	354
Mill-Owners and Standard Cloth Scheme	355
Election of Office—Bearers	355
THE ALL INDIA MANUFACTURERS' CONFERENCE	355
THIRD SESSION—BARODA—13TH. & 14TH. FEBRUARY, 1943	355
Presidential Address	355
The Welcome Address	356
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—BARODA—14TH. FEBRUARY, 1943	356
THE ALL INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS	357
20TH. SESSION—NAGPUR—1ST. & 2ND. MAY, 1943	357
Presidential Address	357
Proceedings and Resolutions	357
THE ALL INDIA MEDICAL CONFERENCE	358
NINETEENTH SESSION—PATNA—23RD. & 24TH. APRIL, 1943	358
Dr. Sinha's Tribute to Medical Profession	358
Welcome by Dr. Banerjee	359
Presidential Address	359
PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS	360
Sickness Insurance	360
Medical Supplies	360
Abolition of I. M. S.	361
Supply of Petrol	361
Chemical Industries	361
THE ALL BENGAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE	361
CALCUTTA—11TH. & 12TH. APRIL, 1943	361
Mr. Sarker's Opening Address	361
President's Address	362
Dr. Sanyal's speech on food policy	362
Dr. Cyril Fox's Speech	363
INDIAN DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT	364
HOUSE OF COMMONS—LONDON—30TH. MARCH, 1943	364
MR. AMERY'S SPEECH	364
Congress Party's Policy	364
Results of 1937 Elections	365
Japanese advance in Burma	365

Viceroy's Cabinet praised	...	...	...	366
Limit to Credulity	...	...	...	367
Mr. Gandhi's Fast	...	...	...	367
League and Mahasabha	...	...	...	367
Rut of accustomed lines	...	...	...	368
Different age	...	...	...	369
New Element in Situation	...	...	...	369
SIR G. SCHUSTER'S PLEA	...	...	...	370
MR. ATTLEE'S REPLY	...	...	...	371
Revolver and Bomb	...	...	...	371
Curious position of Mr. Gandhi	...	...	...	373
HOUSE OF LORDS—LONDON—6TH. APRIL, 1943	...	...	...	373
EARL OF MUNSTER'S SPEECH	...	...	...	373
World's largest Volunteer army	...	...	...	374
Indian Air Force	...	...	...	374
Royal Indian Army	...	...	...	374
Financial aspect	...	...	...	374
Political Situation	...	...	...	375
Early Congress Attitude	...	...	...	375
Muslim Attitude	...	...	...	376
Appeal to Party Leaders	...	...	...	376
Responsible to Congress	...	...	...	377
Muslim Demands	...	...	...	377
Congress Complicity	...	...	...	378
Lord Hailey's Speech	...	...	...	379
Lord Snell's Speech	...	...	...	379
THE SOUTH AFRICAN ANTI-INDIAN LEGISLATION				380
THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA COMMUNIQUE	...	...	...	380
DEBATE IN SOUTH AFRICAN ASSEMBLY	...	...	...	380
Dominion Party Criticised	...	...	...	381
Broome Commission Findings	...	...	...	381
Indians' Protest	...	...	...	381
Indian Acquisition	...	...	...	382
Pegging Bill introduced in Assembly	...	...	...	382
Second Reading of the Bill—Minister's Statement	...	...	...	383
Broome Commission Report	...	...	...	383
The Housing Problem	...	...	...	383
Not a Segregation Law	...	...	...	384
Greater Civic Amenities	...	...	...	384
Pensions enhanced	...	...	...	385
Dr. J. H. Hofmeyr's Plea	...	...	...	386
Col. Stallard's Support	...	...	...	386
Declaration of 1932	...	...	...	386
Dr. Malan's Demand	...	...	...	386
Field Marshal Smuts explains	...	...	...	387
Government's Intentions	...	...	...	387
Opposition to Bill	...	...	...	387
Official Reply—"Bill purely an Interim measure"	...	...	...	388
Trading Licences	...	...	...	388
Bill passes Second Reading	...	...	...	388
Move to extend scope of Bill	...	...	...	389
Amendments Lost	...	...	...	389

In the Senate	...	...	390
Minister's Reply	...	...	390
DR. KHARE'S STATEMENT IN ASSEMBLY	...	...	391
History of Indian Emigration	...	...	391
Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's Note	...	...	391
Indian Labour's Contribution	...	...	392
"Insolent Injustice"	...	...	392
What Lord Morley said	...	...	392
Townships Act and Gold Law	...	—	393
Gandhi-Smuts Agreement	...	...	393
Gen. Smuts' Tribute to Indian Troops	...	...	393
The Capetown Agreement	...	...	393
The Correspondence	...	...	395
THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE			397
Discussion on Indian Policy	...	...	397
Delegates' Protests	...	...	397
THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN INDIA 1943			398
THE INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS	...	...	398
THIRTIETH SESSION—CALCUTTA—2ND. JANUARY 1943	...	...	398
Dr. B. C. Roy's Speech	...	...	398
Mr. Wadia on need for planning	...	...	398
Metallurgical Industry in Defence	...	...	399
Post-War Mineral Distribution	...	...	399
India's great Resources	...	...	399
Social Obligations of Science	...	...	400
Proposed Academy of Social Sciences	...	...	400
Geology & Geography Section	...	...	401
Nehru to continue as President	...	...	402
Botany Section	...	...	402
Archaeology Section	...	...	402
Agricultural Section	...	...	402
THE POLITICAL SCIENCE CONGRESS			403
FIFTH SESSION—AGRA—2ND. JANUARY 1943	...	...	403
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	...	...	403
Balkanisation of India	...	...	403
Origin of two Nations Theory	...	...	404
"League is sure of British support"	...	...	404
ALL INDIA MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE			405
52ND. SESSION—ALIGARH—13TH. FEBRUARY 1943	...	...	405
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS	...	...	405
Women's Education	...	...	405
Mr. Haroon Jaffar on Social Reform	...	...	405
THE NAGPUR UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			406
Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker's Address	...	...	406
THE ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			413
Syed Abdul Aziz's Address	...	...	413
THE BOMBAY UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			419
Mr. B. J. Wadia's Address	...	...	419
THE GURUKUL UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			424
Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee's Address	...	...	424
THE OSMANIA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			427
Sir Ardeshir Dalal's Address	...	...	427
THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			434
Dr. B. C. Roy's Address	...	...	434

Administration of India 1943

British India consists of the 11 Provinces of Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces and Berar, Madras, North West Frontier, Orissa, Punjab, Sind and the United Provinces, plus the Chief Commissionerships of British Beluchistan, Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara, Coorg, the Andamans and Nicobar Islands, Panth Piploda, and does not include any Indian States.

Reigning Sovereign—His Majesty George the VI

India Office

Secretary of State for India—The Right Hon. Mr. L. S. Amery, (April, 1940).

Permanent Under-Secretary of State Sir Find-later Stewart, G.C.B., G.C.I.E. C.S.I., L.L.D.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State—The Earl of Munster.

Advisers to the Secretary of State—Sir H. Strakosh G.B.E. Sir H. Williamson C.I.E., M.B.E., Sir J. Clay, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., O.B.E., Lt. Col. Sir H. Suhrawardy, O.B.E. Sir J. A. Woodhead, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Dewan Bahadur S. E. Ruganadhan, Sir Courtenay Latimer, K.C.I.E., C.S.I. Sir G. Wiles, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Sir A. G. Chatterjea, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.

High Commissioner of India—Sir Azizul Huq, Kt. C.I.E.

Trade Commissioner for India—Sir David Meek Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E.

Government of India

(Area—1,808,679, Sq. miles with a population of 352,337,773 of people—nearly one-fifth of human race)

Viceroy & Governor General

His Excellency The Most Hon'ble The Marquess of Linlithgow, P.C., K.T., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., O.B.E., D.L. T.D., (18th April 1936)

Members of the Executive Council

His Excellency General Sir Claude John Eyre Auchinleck, G.C.I.E. C.B., C.S.I., D.S.O., O.B.E., A.D.C., Commander-in-Chief in India (*War*).

The Hon'ble Sir Reginald Maxwell, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. (*Home*).

The Hon'ble Sir Jeremy Raisman, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. (*Finance*).

The Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, K.C.S.I. (*Supply*).

The Hon'ble Sir Sultan Ahmed D.L., Bar-at-Law (*Information*).

The Hon'ble Malik Sir Firoz Khan Noon, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. (*Defence*).

The Hon'ble Sir Edward Benthall (*War Transport*).

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Sir Mohammad Usman, K.C.I.E. (*Post and Air*).

The Hon'ble Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (*Labour*).

The Hon'ble Sir J. P. Srivastava, K.B.E. (*Food*).

The Hon'ble Sir Jogendra Singh (*Education, Health and Lands*).

The Hon'ble Sir Mubammad Azizul Haque, C.I.E., D.LITT. (*Commerce, Industries and Civil Supplies*).

The Hon'ble Dr. N. B. Khare (*Indians overseas*).

The Hon'ble Sir Asoke Kumar Roy (*Law*).

President, Legislative Assembly—The Hon. Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I.

President, Council of State—The Hon. Sir Maneckji Byramji Dadabhoi, K.C.S.I. K.C.I.E., L.L.D., Bar-at-Law.

Numerical Strength of Parties

(a) IN CENTRAL ASSEMBLY

Congress Party	40
Muslim League Party	25
Non-Party	25
Independent Party	10
Congress Nationalists	11
European Group	9
Officials	20

TOTAL 140

(b) IN COUNCIL OF STATE

Independent Progressive Party	10
Congress Party	6
Muslim League	6

TOTAL 22

Government of Bengal

*Area :—82,955 sq. miles ; Population—68,314,000 (*Provisional to the nearest thousand*).

Governor

H. E. Sir John A. Herbert, G.C.I.E.

H. E. Sir Thomas George Rutherford,
K.C.S.I., C.I.E., (assumed office on 6-9-43)

Council of Ministers

Coalition formed on 24th April 1943.

(1) The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, K. C. I. E., Chief Minister and Minister for Home Department (Including Civil Defence Co-ordination) (*Muslim Bengal Coalition*)

(2) The Hon'ble Mr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Civil Supplies, (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(3) The Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami, Finance (Caste Hindu—Bengal Coalition).

(4) The Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, Education, (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(5) The Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna Pain, Communication & Works, (*Caste Hindu—Bengal Coalition*).

(6) The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain, Agriculture, (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(7) The Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukherjee, M. B. E., Revenue (*Caste Hindu-Bengal Coalition*).

(8) The Hon'ble Musharruff Hosain, Khan Bahadur, Judicial and Legislative (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(9) The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Sahabuddin C. B. E., Commerce, Labour and Industries (Including Post-War Reconstruction) (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(10) The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari Barman, Forest and Excise, (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*).

(11) Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmed, Public Health and Local Self-Government (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*.)

(12) The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary Mullick, Publicity, (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*).

(13) The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal, Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness. (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*).

Parliamentary Secretaries

(1) Khan Bahadur Mohammad Ali (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(2) Nawabzada K. Nasarullah, (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(3) Mr. Abdullah Al-Mahmood (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*)

(4) Mr. Serajul Islam, (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(5) Mr. Biren Roy (*Caste Hindu—Bengal Coalition*).

(6) Khan Sahib Mafizuddin Ahmed (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(7) Mr. Atul Chandra Kumar (*Caste Hindu-Bengal Coalition*).

(8) Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*)

(9) M. Jatindra Nath Chakraverty (*Caste Hindu-Bengal Coalition*).

(10) Mr. Syed Abdul Majid (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(11) Khan Sahib Hamiduddin Ahmed (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(12) Mr. Banku Behari Mondal, (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*).

(13) Khan Bahadur A. F. M. Abdur Rahman (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(14) Mr. Fazlul Rahman (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

(15) Mr. Mesbahuddin Ahmed (*Muslim Bengal Coalition*).

(16) Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das (*Scheduled Caste-Bengal Coalition*).

(17) Mr. Ynsuf Ali Chowdhury (*Muslim-Bengal Coalition*).

Party Analysis in the Bengal Legislative

Assembly—(Total Seats—250)

Government Supporters

1. Muslim League	79
2. Bengal Swarajya Party	5
3. Bengal Legislature Scheduled Caste party.	20
4. European Group	25
5. Labour Party	2
6. Independent	4
7. Indian Christian	1
8. Anglo-Indians	4

140

Opposition

1. Progressive Party	24
2. Krishak Proja Party	17
3. Nationalists	13
4. Congress (Official)	25
5. Congress (Bose Group)	19
6. Indian Christian	1
7. Independent	1
8. Scheduled Caste	8

108

(One seat is vacant. The Hon'ble

Speaker is not included)

Party Analysis in the Bengal Legislative Council.

(Total Seats—63)

Government Supporters

1. Muslim League	23
2. Unattached	7
3. Europeans	6

36

Opposition

1. Progressive Party	7
2. Congress (Bose Group)	5

3. Congress (Official)	6
4. Nationalists	6
5. Unattached	2

26

(The Hon'ble President is not included).

Capital and its population—

Calcutta—21,09,000 (Provisional to the nearest thousand)

Summer Capital and its population

Darjeeling—25,900 (Provisional to the nearest thousand)

Receipt and Expenditure on Revenue Account for the current year—

Receipts—Rs. 18,43,89,000/-

Expenditure Rs. 25,80,57,000/-

Government of the Punjab

(Area—136,930 Sq. miles, Population—28,490,857.)

Council of Ministers(a) The Hon. Lt. Col. Nawabzada Malik Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana. (*Muslim-Unionist*.)(b) The Hon. Rao Bahadur Chaudhri Sir Chhotu Ram, Minister of Revenue (*Hindu-Unionist*).(c) The Hon. Sir Manohar Lal, Finance Minister (*Hindu-National Progressive*).(d) The Hon. Mian Abdul Haye, Minister of Education, (*Muslim-Unionist*).(e) The Hon. Sardar Baldev Singh, Minister of Development, (*Sikh-Punjab United Sikh Party*).(f) The Hon. Major Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan, Minister of Public works. (*Muslim-Muslim League*).Political designation of the Ministry—*Unionist*.

Date of formation of Ministry—December 30, 1942

Parliamentary Secretaries :(a) Mir Maqbool Mahmood, (*Muslim-Unionist*).(b) Mian Allah Yar Khan Daultana (*Muslim-Unionist*)(c) Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan (*Muslim Unionist*).(d) Sheikh Faiz Muhammad M. B. E. (*Muslim Unionist*).(e) Rai Sahib Thakur Ripudaman Singh (*Hindu-National Progressive*).(f) Chaudhary Tikka Ram, M. B. E. (*Hindu Unionist*).(g) Sardar Jagjit Singh Man, M. B. E. (*Sikh-Punjab United Sikh Party*).(h) Sardar Gopal Singh (*Depressed Class Unionist*)**Parliamentary Private Secretaries**(a) Syed Amjad Ali Shah, M. B. E. (*Unionist-Muslim*).(b) Bhagat Hans Raj (*Depressed Class-Unionist*).

(c) Sir William Roberts, Kt. C. I. E.

(d) Mian Sultan Mahmud Hotiana (*Muslim-Unionist*).(e) Sufi Abdul Hamid Khan (*Muslim-Unionist*).**Numerical Strength of Parties**

The total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly is 175 including the Hon'ble Speaker. They are divided into parties as follows :—

Government Supporters :— Unionist Party 97; Punjab United Sikh Party 17; Independent 3; National Progressive 4; Total 121.**Opposition :—** Congress Party 36; Independent Members 17; Total 53.

Capital and its population—Lahore—4,29,747.

Summer capital and its population—Simla—18,144.

Receipts and Expenditure on Revenue Account for the current year—1943-44—Revenue Estimate Rs. 15,19 lakhs—Expenditure Rs. 14,69 lakhs.

Government of Sind

(Area—46,378 Sq. miles; Population—4,536,008).

Governor

Sir Hugh Dow, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., (April, 1, 1941.)

Council of Ministers

Coalition—Formed on 10-10-1942

The Hon'ble Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah K.C.S.I., (Premier in charge, Finance Department) (*Muslim League*).The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ayub S. Khuhro (Minister-in-charge Revenue, Registration and Co-operative Societies). (*Muslim League*).The Hon'ble Pir Illahi Bakhsh Nawazali (Minister-in-charge, Education, Excise, Forest, Agriculture, Rural Reconstruction and Labour Departments) (*Muslim League*).The Hon'ble Haji Muhammad Hashim Gazdar (Minister-in-charge, Home, Legal, Political and Miscellaneous Departments) (*Muslim League*).The Hon'ble Rao Saheb Gokaldas Mewaldas Rochlani (Minister-in-charge, Public Works Department and Local Self Government Department) (*Hindu Mahasabha*).The Hon'ble Dr. Hemandas Rupchand Wadhvani (Minister-in-charge, Medical, Public Health, Veterinary and Industries Departments) (*Hindu Mahasabha*).**Parliamentary Secretaries**(1) Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh K. Gabole. (*Baloch*).

- (2) Syed Nur Muhammad Shah
(Muslim League).
- (3) Mrs. Jenubai Ghulamali Allana
(Muslim League).
- (4) Mr. Muhammad Yusif Khan
Chandio (Muslim League).
- (5) Seth Lolumal Rewachand
Motwani (Hindu Mahasabha).

Numerical Strength of Parties

Total Seats. 60.

Congress 10; Hindu Independent
Party 9; Muslim League 28; Hindu
Mahasabha 3; Europeans 3; No Party 7

Capital and its Population :—Karachi—
386, 655.

Budget for 1943-44—Revenue Receipts

Rs. 4,96,41,000.

Expenditure on Revenue Accounts
Rs. 5,09,37,000.

Government of Orissa

(Area—82,000. Sq. miles; Population—
87,28,544.

Governor

H. E. Sir William Hawthorne Lewis.
K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., J.P., (April 1, 1941).

Council of Ministers

Coalition, formed Nov. 24, 1941. *Per-
sonnel* :—

(1) Hon'ble Captain Maharaja Sri
Sri Krishna Chandra Gajapati Narayan
Deo of Parlakimedi (Prime Minister).
*Home Affairs (excluding Publicity) Local
Self-Government and Public Works.*

(2) Hon'ble Pandit Godavaris Misra—
*Finance, Home Affairs (Publicity), Deve-
lopment and Education.*

(3) Hon'ble Maulavi Abdus Sobhan
Khan—*Law and Commerce, Revenue and
Health.*

Speaker, Legislative Assembly—Hon'ble
Sri Mukunda Prasad Das.

Numerical Strength of Parties

Total Seats—60

Congress 31; Nationalist Coalition
26, Independent 2.

Capital and its population, Cuttack
74,297. No Summer Capital.

Receipts and Expenditure on Revenue
Account for the current year. Receipts
Rs. 212.21 lakhs; Expenditure—Rs.
2,16.07 lakhs.

Government of Assam

(Area—87,334 Sq. miles, Population—
10,830,388).

Governor—Sir Andrew Gourlay Clow,
K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., (May 4, 1942.);

Council of Ministers

Coalition formed August 25, 1942;
Personnel :—

(1) Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad
Saadullah, M.A., B.L., (Muslim League)
Prime Minister.

(2) Naba Kumar Datta (Assam
United Party).

(3) Maulvi Munawwar Ali, B.A. L.L.B.
(Muslim League).

(4) Hirendra Chandra Chakrabarti,
B. A., (Assam United Party).

(5) Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir
Hussain Chaudhuri, B.L., (Muslim League).

(6) Dr. Mahendra Nath Saikia, L.M.P.,
(Assam United Party).

(7) Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur
Rahaman, M.A., B.L., (Muslim League).

(8) Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri,
B.L., (Muslim League).

(9) Miss Mavis Dunn, B.A., B. T.,
B.L., (Assam United Party).

(10) Rupnath Brahma, B.L., (Assam
United Party). Appointed Minister on
August 28, 1942).

No Parliamentary Secretaries.

Numerical Strength of Parties

Legislative Assembly :—Total seats—108
Congress—30

Assam United Party—58 (including 9
Assam Nationalist Europeans)

Coalition Party—14

Independent—5

Speaker—1

108

Legis Council :—Muslim 7—including
the President, Mrs. Rahman, the rest
belonging to the Assam United Party
and also to the League Party; Europeans
2; Plains Tribal 1; Scheduled Hindu 1;
Ahom Community 1; Caste Hindu 1
(the latter 4 members belong to the
Assam Party); Independents 9 (Mar-
waries 3 and Caste Hindu 6).

Capital and its Population—Shillong—
38,192. No Summer Capital.

*Receipts and Expenditure for current
year* :—Receipts Rs. 3,64,20,000; Expen-
diture Rs. 3,72,29,000.

Government of Madras

(Area 1,24,363 Sq. Miles. Population—
4,98,40,564).

Governor :—Capt. the Hon. Sir Arthur
Oswald James Hope, G.C.I.E., M.O.;
Assumed charge March 12, 1940.

Advisory Council

Advisory Council formed October 30,
1939; Present Personnel :

(1) Sir George Boag, K.C.I.E. C.S.I.,
I.C.S.

(2) Sir Hugh Hood, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S.

(3) T. G. Rutherford, C.S.I., C.I.E.,
I.C.S.

(4) S. V. Ramamurty, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Numerical Strength of Parties

Legis. Assembly; Total Seats 215 (vacant 30.) Congress 142; Justice 14; Anglo-Indian 2; Muslim League 12; European 4; Independents 8; National Democrats 3; Total 185.

Legis. Council:—Total seats 55 (vacant 13) Congress 23; Justice 4; Muslim League 2; National Democrats 2; Independents 8. Those who have not intimated their party affiliation 3; Total 42.

Capital and its Population—Madras : 7,77,481.

Summer Capital and its Population Ootacamund : 292,850.

Receipts : Rs. 21,32,63,000.

Expenditure : Rs. 21,22,58,000.

Government of Bombay

(Area :—76,448 sq. miles; Population—20,849,840.

Governor—Sir John Colville G.C.I.E., T.D. (24 March 1943.)

Advisory Council

Council formed Nov. 4, 1939; Present Personnel:

H. F. Knight, Esq., C. S. I., C. I. E. I. C. S. Portfolio : Finance.

C. H. Bristow, Esq., C. I. E., I. C. S. Portfolio : Home.

G. F. S. Collins, Esq., C. S. I., C. I. E. I. C. S. Portfolio : Revenue.

I. H. Taunto, Esq., C. I. E., I. C. S. Portfolio : Education.

Numerical Strength of Parties.

(a) *In Assembly*—(Total Seats—175) Congress 86; Muslim League 25; Independents 13; Independent Labourers 14; Progressive 12; Peasant and Peoples 7; Peasants and Workers 7; Democratic Swaraj 4; Vaant Seats 70; Total 175.

(b) *In Council*—(Total Seats 30) Congress 10; Muslim League 3; Independents 9; Progressive 1; Democratic Swaraj 3; Liberal 1; Vacant Seats 3; Total 30.

Capital and its population—Bombay City—1,489,883

Summer Capital and its population—Poona—338,448

Receipts—Rs. 1,769, 20 lakhs.

Expenditure—Rs. 1,768,74 lakhs.

Govt. of the United Provinces

(Area—1,12,191 sq. miles; Population—5,63,46,456).

Governor—H. E. Sir Maurice Garnier Hallett, K.C.I.E., C.I.E., I.C.S., (December 6, 1939).

Advisory Council—formed on November 4, 1939. Personnel :—

(1) Dr. Panna Lal, M.A., M.Sc., LL.B. (Cantab), D. Litt. (Agra), Bar-at-Law,

C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,—Education, Industries, Local-Self-Government and Public Health.

(2) Sir Tennant Sloan, M.A. (Glas.) K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S.—Home affairs, Finance, Justice and Jails.

(3) Mr. A. G. Shirref, B.A., J.P., I.C.S.—Revenue, Rural Development, Agriculture, Forests, Communications and Irrigation.

Numerical Strength of Parties

(a) *IN ASSEMBLY*—(Total seats—228). Government supporters : Congress 147, Opposition : Muslim League 36, Independent 24, Unattached (generally vote with Opposition) 21—Total 228.

(b) *IN COUNCIL*—(Total seats—60) Government supporters: Congress 14; Opposition : Nationalist 13, Independent 8, Unattached (including 11 who have not intimated Party affiliations) 24: Total—59 (excluding President).

Capital and its population—Allahabad; 2,60,630.

Summer Capital and its population—Naini Tal—21,313.

Receipts and expenditure on Revenue Accounts for the current year :—

Receipts—Rs. 20,26,57,900

Expenditure—Rs. 20,18,28,700

Government of Bihar

(Area—69,348 Sq. Miles; Population—36,340,000.

Governor—H. E. Sir Thomas Alexander Stewart, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S. (August 6, 1939).

Advisory Council

Council formed Nov. 4, 1939.

Personnel

1. F. R. J. R. Cousins C.I.E., I.C.S.

2. R. E. Russell, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

Numerical Strength of Parties

In Assembly—(a) Total number of members 147 (excluding 5 seats vacant due to death of members.)

(b) Number of Muslim member (seats) 38 (excluding 2 seats vacant due to death.

(c) Number of members belonging to Congress party 96 (excluding 2 seats vacant due to death of members.

(d) Number of Muslim League party in the Assembly. There is no such recognised party. But there are five members who owe allegiance to Muslim League.

In Council—(a) Total number of members 29

(b) Number of seats retained by the Muslim members 8.

(c) Number of members belonging to the Congress Party 10.

(d) Members belonging to the Muslim League Party 2. There is no such recog-

nised party in the Council but two members have informed that they owe allegiance to the Muslim League.

Capital and its population—Patna—196,415.

Summer Capital and its population—Ranchi—62,562.

Receipts and Expenditure on Revenue Account for the current year :

Receipts—697 lakhs.

Expenditure—636 lakhs.

Government of C. P. & Berar

(Area—88,576 Sq. Miles ; Population—1,68,97,096.)

Governor—H. E. Sir Henry Twynam K.C.I.E., C.I.E., I.C.S. (October 2, 1940).

ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Council formed Nov. 11. 1939.

Personnel—(i) Sir Geoffrey Pownall Burton, K.C.I.E., I.C.S.

(ii) Henry Challen Greenfield, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

Numerical Strength of Parties

Total Seats—	112.
Congress Party	69
Independent Party	16
Muslim League Party	9
United Party	5
Independent (Unattached)	9

Seats vacant	108
	4

112
Capital and its population—Nagpur, 3,01,957.

Summer capital and its population—Panchmarhi, 6,696.

Receipts and expenditure on Revenue Account for the year 1942-1943 :

Receipts—Rs. 6,68,78,084.

Expenditure—Rs. 5,65,97,096.

Govt. of N W. F. Province

(Area—39,276 Sq. Miles ; Population—5,415,666.)

Governor—H. E. Sir George Cunningham, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S. (March 2, 1937.)

Advisory Council—J. G. Acheson, C.I.E., I.C.S., Adviser to H. E. the Governor.

Numerical strength of Parties

Total seats—50, Congress—23, Nationalist—3, Muslim League—13, Liberals (Democratic)—2, Independents—3, No party 1. Died Convicted and resigned—5.

Population of the Capital—Peshawar City 130,967. Peshawar Cantonment—42,453.

Estimated revenue receipts—Rs. 2,06,94,000; *Estimated revenue expenditure*—Rs. 2,14,97,000.

(For Formation of Ministry, See p.264)

Federal Court of India.

Chief Justice of India—The Hon. Sir Patrick spens, O.B.E. (Apptd. in 1943).

Judges.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Srinivasa Varadachariar, Kt., (App. in 1939).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, K. C. S. I. (Appointed in 1941),

Bengal Judicial Department.

High Court—Calcutta.

Chief Justice—The Hon. Sir Harold Derbyshire, M. C., K. C., Barrister at-Law, (12-11-1934).

Puisne Judges—The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Torick Ameer Ali, Kt., Barrister-at-Law (30-11-1931).

The Hon. Mr. Justice George Douglas McNair, Kt., Barrister-at-Law, (16-11-1933).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Syed Nasim Ali, M. A., B. L. (13-11-1933)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Alan Gerald Russell Henderson, B. A. (Oxon), I. C. S., (12-11-1934).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Rupendra Coomar Mitter, M. SC., M. L., (12-11-1934)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Nural Azeem Khundkar, B. A., LL. B., Barrister-at-Law, (8-11-1937).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Benegal Narsing Rau, Kt., C. I. E., I. C. S., (16-1-1939)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Noeman George Armstrong Edgley, M. A. (Oxon) I. C. S., Barrister-at-Law. J. P. (8-11-1937)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Bijan Kumar Mukherjee, M. A., D. L., (9-11-1936)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Charu Chandra Biswas, C. I. E., M. A., B. L., (1-3-1937)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Ronald Francis Lodge, B. A., (Cantab) I. C. S., J. P., (7-11-1938)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Frederick William Gentle, Barrister-at-Law, (10-11-1941)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Amarendra Nath Sen, Barrister-at-Law, (7-11-1938)

The Hon. Mr. Justice Thomas James Young Roxburgh, C. I. E., B. A., (Cantab) I. C. S., Barrister-at-Law, J. P. (15-11-1939).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Abu Saleh Mohamed Akram, B. L. (26-9-1943).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Sudhi Ranjan Das, B. A. (Calcutta) LL. B. (London) Barrister-at-Law, (Addl.) (1-12-1942).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Abraham Lewis Blank, M. A. (Oxon) I. C. S., Barrister-at-Law, J. P. (Addl.) (2-2-1942).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Radhabinod

Pal, M. A., D. L., (Offg) (1-12-1942—to 22-6-1943).

Bombay Judicial Department

High Court—Bombay.

Chief Justice—Leonard Stone, The Hon'ble Sir, Kt., O. B. E. (1-10-43).

Puisne Judges.—Harilal Jekisondas Kania, The Hon'ble Sir, LL. B., Advocate (O. S.), Kt. (19-6-1933).

Navroji Jahangir Wadia, The Hon'ble Sir, B. A. (Bom & Cantab) Bar-at-Law, I. C. S., Kt. (6-12-1933).

Harsidhbhai Vajubhai Divatia, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, M. A., LL. B., (19-6-1933).

Albert Sortain Romer Macklin, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. (Oxon), I.C.S. (18-6-1935).

Kshitish Chandra Sen, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. (Cal. & Cantab.), I. C. S. (4-8-1941).

Mahommedali Currim Chagla, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law, (4-8-1941).

Narayan Swamirao Lokur, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. LL. B. (24-8-1942).

Eric Weston, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. (Cantab.), I. C. S. (14-1-1943).

N. H. C. Ooyajee, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, B. A. B. SC. (Econ), London, Bar-at-Law, (1-3-1943).

John Basil Blagden, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, (Cantab.), Bar-at-Law. (14-11-1942).

Ganpat Sakharam Rajadhyaksha, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice, M. A. (Cantab.), Bar-at-Law, I. C. S., Addl. Judge. (14-6-1943).

Madras Judicial Department

High Court—Madras

Chief Justice—The Hon. Sir Lionel Leach (E). Bar-at-law. 10th. Feb. 33.

Puisne Judges

The Hon. Mr. Justice V. Mockett, M.B.E. (E). Bar-at-law.

The Hon. Mr. Justice A. J. King. (E). I.C.S.

The Hon. Mr. Justice S. Wadsworth. (E). I.C.S. Bar-at-law.

The Hon. Mr. Justice K. P. Lakshmana Rao, Diwan Bahadur (B). Advocate.

The Hon. Mr. Justice N. Chandra-sekshara Iyer.

The Hon. Mr. Justice C. N. Kuppuswami Ayyar.

The Hon. Mr. Justice M. Shahabuddin The Hon. Mr. Justice K. S. Krishna-swami Ayyangar. (B). Advocate.

The Hon. Mr. Justice B. Somayya. (B). Advocate.

The Hon. Mr. Justice M. Patanjali Sastri. (B). Advocate.

The Hon. Mr. Justice L. O. Horwill. (E). I.C.S. Bar-at-law.

The Hon. Mr. Justice A. C. Happell. (E). I.C.S.

The Hon. Mr. Justice J. A. Bell. (E). Bar-at-law.

The Hon. Mr. Justice C. Kunhi Raman, Diwan Bahadur. (N). B.A., B.L. Bar-at-law.

The Hon. Mr. Justice J. A. Byers. (E). I.C.S. Bar-at-law.

Behar & Orissa Judicial Dept.

High Court—Patna

Chief Justice—The Hon. Sir Saiyid Fazl Ali, Barrister-at-law. 19-1-1943.

Puisne Judges—The Hon. Sir Clifford Monmohan Agarwala, Barrister-at-Law 11-7-1933.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Sukhdev Prasad Varma, Barrister-at-Law. 22-1-1934.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Francis George Rowland, I.C.S., 21-8-1936.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Manohar Lal M.A., (Cantab). Barrister-at-law. 3-6-1939.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Subodh Ch. Chatterji, 28-9-1939.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Herbert Ribton Meredith, I.C.S., 1-10-1940.

The Hon. Mr. Justice James Creig Shearer, I.C.S., Barrister-at-Law. 19-1-1943.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Bhuvaneshwar Prashad Sinha. 6-12-43.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice David Ezra Renben, I.C.S. Addl. 14-8-43.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Saiyed Jafar Imam, Barrister-at-Law, Addl. 25-10-43.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice R. B. Bewor, I.C.S. Addl. 8-11-43.

C. P. & Berar Judicial Dept.

High Court—Nagpur

Chief Justice—The Honourable Sir Frederick Grille, Kt., I.C.S.

Puisne Judges—1. The Honourable Mr. Justice M. A. Niyogi, C.I.E. On leave from 1-11-43.

2. The Honourable Mr. Justice R. E. Pollock, I.C.S.

3. The Honourable Mr. Justice Vivian Bose.

4. The Honourable Mr. Justice W. R. Puranik.

5. The Honourable Mr. Justice K. G. Digby, I.C.S.

6. The Honourable Mr. Justice J. Sen.

7. The Honourable Mr. Justice M. R. Bobde—Officiating vice no. 1 from 1-11-43.

Punjab Judicial Department**High Court—Lahore***Chief Justice*

The Honourable Sir John Douglas Young. 7th May, 1934.

The Honourable Sir Arthur Trevor Harries. 19th January, 1943.

Puisne Judges

1. The Honourable Mr. Justice Tek Chand, Kt., 27th January, 1927.

2. The Honourable Mr. Justice Dalip Singh, Kt., 4th October, 1926.

3. The Honourable Mr. Justice Monroe. 7th December, 1931.

4. The Honourable Mr. Justice Bhide, 2nd October, 1933.

5. The Honourable Mr. Justice Abdul Rashed. 2nd October, 1933.

6. The Honourable Mr. Justice Din Muhammad. 2nd May 1936.

7. The Honourable Mr. Justice Blacker. 23rd November, 1937.

8. The Honourable Mr. Justice Ram Lal. 9th February, 1938.

9. The Honourable Mr. Justice Sale. 14th November, 1939.

10. The Honourable Mr. Justice Beckett. 23rd September, 1940.

11. The Honourable Mr. Justice Muhammad Abdur Rahaman, Kt., 13th February, 1943.

12. The Honourable Mr. Justice Muhammad Munir. 28th September, 1942.

13. The Honourable Mr. Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan. 27th Sept. 1943.

14. The Honourable Mr. Justice Marten. Additional Judge (except from 16-7-1943 to 26-9-1943).

15. The Honourable Mr. Justice Dhawan. (Acting from 29-1-1943 to 15-7-1943)

16. The Honourable Mr. Justice Teja Singh. (Acting 1-2-1943 to 15-7-1943.

Additional from 17th Sept., 1943).

United Provinces Judicial Dept.**High Court—Allahabad**

Chief Justice—Hon'ble Sir Iqbal Ahmad Kt., B.A., LL.B.

Puisne Judges—Hon. Sir H. J. Collister, Kt., J.P., I.C.S.

Hon. Mr. Justice J. J. W. Allsop, J.P., I.C.S.

Hon. Mr. Justice Mohammad Ismail, Khan Bahadur, Bar-at-law.

Hon. Mr. Justice K. K. Verma, B.A., LL.B.

Hon. Mr. Justice H.B.L. Braund, Bar-at-law, (on deputation)

Hon. Mr. Justice T. N. Mulla, Rai Bahadur, M.A., LL.B.

Hon. Mr. Justice A. H. deB. Hamilton, J.P., I.C.S.

Hon. Mr. Justice S. K. Dar, B.A., LL.B.

Hon. Mr. Justice R. L. Yorke, J.P., I.C.S.

Hon. Mr. Justice G. P. Mathur, Rai Bahadur, B.A., LL.B. Additional Puisne Judge.

Hon. Mr. Justice P. P. M. C. Plowden, J.P., I.C.S. Acting Puisne Judge.

Chief Court of Oudh—Lucknow

Chief Judge—Hon. Sir George Thomas, Kt., Bar-at-Law. (23-7-1938).

Judges—Hon. Mr. Justice J. R. W. Bennet, I.C.S. (13-7-1940)

Hon. Mr. Justice Ghulam Hasan, (16-9-1940).

Hon. Mr. Justice Lakshmi Shanker Misra, Bar-at-Law. (11-5-43).

Hon. Mr. Justice W. Y. Madeley, I.C.S. Addl. Judge. (11-5-1941).

Chief Court of Sind

Chief Judge—The Hon. Sir Godfrey Davis, Barrister-at-Law. (15-4-1940).

Judge—The Hon. Mr. Justice Charles M. Lobo, LL.B. (15-4-1940).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Hatim Badruddin Tyabji, Barrister-at-Law, (15-4-1940).

The Hon. Mr. Justice Dennis Neil O'Sullivan, Barrister-at-Law. (14-1-1943).

Indian States (with Salutes)

(Area—712,508 Sq. miles ; Population—81,310,845).

Assam State

Manipur—H. H. Maharaja Sir Chura Chand Singh, K.C.S.I., C.B.E. Maharaja of—

Date of Birth—15th April, 1885

Date of succession—18th September, 1891

Area in Sq. miles—8638 (Approximately)

Population of State—4,45,606

Revenue—Nearly Rs. 9,59,620

Salute in guns—11.

Baluchistan State

Kalat—His Highness Beglar Begi Mir Sir Mahmud Khan, G.C.I.E., Wali of—

Date of Birth—1864

Date of succession—1893

Area of State in Square miles—73,278

Population of State—328,281

Revenue—Rs. 17,78,000 nearly

Salute in Guns—19.

Baroda State

Baroda—His Highness Farzand-i-Khas-i-Daulat-i-Inglishta Maharaja Sir Pratapsingh Gaekwar, G.C.I.E. Sena Khas

Khel, Shamsah Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of Birth—29th June, 1908

Date of succession—7th. Feb. 1939

Area of State in sq. miles—8,164

Population of State—28,550,10
Revenue—Rs. 245'23 lacs
Salute in guns—21.

Bengal States

Cooch Behar—H. H. Maharaja Jagad-
dipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, Maha-
raja of—

Date of Birth—15th December, 1915
Date of succession—20th December, 1922

Area of State in sq. miles—131,835
Population of State—6,39,898
Revenue—About Rs. 58½ lakhs
Salute in guns—13.

Tripura—H. H. Maharaja Manikya
Bir Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Baha-
dur, K.C.S.I., Maharaja of—

Date of Birth—19th August, 1908
Date of succession—13th August, 1923
Area of State in sq. miles—4,116
Population of State—382,450
Revenue—Rs. 33,42,104 (including
the revenue of the zamindaries in British
India)

Salute in guns—13.

Bihar & Orissa States

Kalahandi—H. H. Maharaja Pratapkeshori
Deo, Maharaja of—

Date of Birth—5th October '19
Date of succession—19th September '39
Area in sq. miles—3,745
Population—5,99,751
Revenue—Rs. 6,43,000
Salute in guns—9

Mayurbhanj—Maharaja Sir Pratap Chandra
Bhanj Deo, K.C.I.E. Maharaja of—

Date of birth—18th February, '01
Date of succession—23rd April, '28
Area in sq. miles—4,243
Population—9,89,887
Revenue—Rs. 34 lacs
Salute in guns—9

Patna—H. H. Maharaja Rajendra Narayan
Singh Deo, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—31st March '12
Date of succession—16th January '24
Area in square miles—2,511
Population—16,32,220
Revenue—Rs. 11,02,251
Salute in guns—9

Sonpur—H. H. Maharaja Singh Deo,
K.C.I.E. Maharaja of—

Date of birth—28th June 1874
Date of succession—8th August '02
Area in square miles—906
Population—226,751
Revenue—Rs. 3,74,000 nearly
Salute in guns—9

Bombay Presy. States

Balasnor—H. H. Babi Shri Jamiat
Khanji Munavvar Khanji Nawab
Saheb Bahadur, Nawab of—

Date of birth—10th November 1894
Date of succession—31st December '15
Area in square miles—189
Population—52,525

Revenue—Rs. 3,50,000 nearly
Indian State Forces—Cavalry—60,
Infantry—177, Guns—10
Salute in guns—9

Banada—H. H. Maharawal Shri Indra-
sinhji Pratapsinhji, Raja of—

Date of birth—16th February 1888
Date of succession—21st Sept. '11
Area in square miles—215
Population—40,125
Revenue—Rs. 7,98,000 nearly
Salute in guns—9

Baria—Lt. Col. His Highness Maharao
Shree Sir Ranjitsinhji, K.C.S.I., Ruler of—

Date of birth—10th July 1886
Date of succession—20th Feb. '08
Area in sq. miles—813
Population—1,89,206
Indian State Forces—Cavalry (Irregular)
Strength 17; 1 Company Ranjit Infantry,
Strength 153; 1 Platoon Militia,
Strength 50
Salute in guns—9

Bhor—H. H. Meherban Srimant Raghu-
nathrao Shankarrao, Pant Sachib of—

Date of birth—20 September 1873
Date of succession—17th July '22
Area in square miles—925
Population—1,30,420
Revenue—Rs. 600,000 nearly
Salute in guns—9

Cambay—H. H. Nawab Mirza Hussain
Yawar Khan Saheb Bdr. Nawab of—

Date of birth—16th May '11
Date of succession—21st January '15
Area in sq. miles—392
Population—87,761
Revenue—Rs. 10,00,000 nearly
Indian State Forces—119 Infantry; 166
Police Forces; 15 Body guards.
Salute in guns—11

Chhota Udepur (Mohan)—H. H.
Maharawal Shri Natwarsinhji Fateh-
sinhji, Raja of—

Date of birth—16th November '06
Date of succession—29th August '23
Area in sq. miles—89,034
Population—1,62,145
Revenue—Rs. 13,08,248
Salute in guns—9

Danta—H. H. Maharana Shri Bhavani-
sinhji Hamirsinhji, Maharana of—

Date of birth—12th September 1899
Date of succession—20th November '25
Area in sq. miles—347
Population—19,541
Revenue—Rs. 1,75,000 nearly
Salute in guns—9

- Dharampur**—H. H. Maharana Shri
Vijoyadevi Mohandevji, Raja of—
Date of birth—3rd December 1884
Date of succession—26th March '21
Area in sq. miles—704
Population—1,12,031
Revenue—Rs. 8,50,000
Salute in guns—9
- Idar**—H. H. Maharajadhiraja Shri
Himmat Singhji Sahib Bahadur
Date of birth—2nd September 1899
Date of succession—14th April '31
Area in sq. miles—1,669
Population—3,07,798
Revenue—Rs. 24,66,000 nearly
Salute in guns—15
- Janjira**—H. H. Nawab Sidi Muhammad
Khan Sidi Ahmad Khan, Nawab of—
Date of birth—7th March '14
Date of succession—2nd May '22
Area in sq. miles—379
Population—1,10,388
Revenue—Rs. 11,00,000
Salute in guns—11
- Jawhar**—Shrimant Yeshwantrao Maharaj,
Raja of—
Date of birth—11th December '17
Date of succession—11th December '27
Area in sq. miles—308
Population—65,291
Revenue—Rs. 5,20,000
Salute in guns—9
- Khairpur**—H. H. Mir Faiz Mahomed
Khan Talpur, Mir of—
Date of birth—4th January '13
Date of succession—December '35
Area in sq. miles—6,050
Population—227,168
Revenue—Rs. 25,84 (lacs)
Indian State Forces—Khairpur "Faiz"
Light Infantry, 215; Khairpur Camel
Transport Corps, 72
Salute in guns—15
- Kolhapur**—Col. H. H. Shri Sir Rajaram
Chhatrapati Maharaj, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.,
Maharaja of—
Date of birth—30 July 1897
Date of succession—6th May '22
Area in sq. miles—3,217.1
Population—9,57,157
Revenue—Rs. 126,86,527
Salute in guns—19
- Lunawada**—Lieut. H. H. Maharana Shri
Virbhadrasinghji, Rajaji Sahab of—
Date of birth—8th June '10
Date of succession—2nd October '30
Area in sq. miles—388
Population—95,162
Revenue—About Rs. 5,50,000
Dynastic Salute—9 guns
- Mudhol**—H. H. Srimant Raja Bhairavsinh
(minor), Raja of—
Date of birth—15 October '29
Date of succession—9th November '37
Area in sq. miles—369
Population—62,832
Revenue—Rs. 4,85,000 nearly
Indian State Force—Mudhol Sajjan Singh
Infantry—115
Salute in guns—9
- Rajpipla**—Captain H. H. Maharana Shri
Sir Vijaya Singhji Ohhatrasinhji, K.C.S.I.
Date of birth—30 January 1890
Date of succession—26th September '15
Area in sq. miles—1,517.50
Population—2,48,068
Revenue—Rs. 24,32,000
Indian State Forces—Rajpipla Infantry
152; Rajpipla Bodyguard 25
Salute in guns—13
- Sachin**—His Highness Nawab Sidi
Muhammad Haider Muhammad Yakut
Khan, Mubarezud Daula, Nusrat Jung
Bahadur, Nawab of—
Date of birth—11th September '09
Date of succession—19th November '30
Area in sq. miles—57.80
Revenue—Rs. 4,00,00/-
Indian State Forces—Sachin Infantry 80
Salute in guns—9
- Saugli**—Captain H. H. Raja Shrimant
Sir Chintamanrao Dhundirao alias
Appasaheb Patwardhan, K.C.I.E., Raja of—
Date of birth—14th Feb. 1890
Date of Succession—15th June 1903
Area in sq. miles—1,136
Population—2,93,498
Revenue—Rs. 16,80,244
Salute in guns—9
- Sant**—Maharana Shri Jorawarsinhji
Partapsinhji, Raja of—
Date of birth—24th March 1881
Date of succession—31st August 1896
Area in sq. miles—394
Population—83,531
Revenue—Rs. 485,826
Salute in guns—9
- Savantvadi**—(Minor) H. H. Raja Bahadur
Shrimant Shivram Savant Bhonsle
Date of birth—13th August '27
Date of succession—5th July '37
Area in sq. miles—930
Population—2,52,170
Revenue—Rs. 6,13,478
Salute in guns—9
- Central India States*
- Ajalgarh**—H. H. Maharaja Sawai Bhupal
Singh Bahadur, Maharaja of—
Date of succession—7th June '19
Date of birth—13th November 1866
Area in sq. miles—802
Population—84,790
Revenue—Rs. 5,00,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Altrajpur—H. H. Maharaja Pratap Singh,
K.C.I.E., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—12th Sept. 1881

Date of succession—14th February 1891

Area in sq. miles—836

Population—112,754

Revenue of the State—Rs. 5,35,000

Salute in guns—11

Baoni—H. H. Azam-ul-Umara Iftikhar-
ud-Daulah Imad-ul-Mulk Sahib-i-Jah
Mihin Sardar Nawab Mohammad

Mushtaq-ul-Hasan Khan Sardar Jung,

Date of birth—7th February 1896

Date of succession—28th October '11

Area in sq. miles—121

Population—25,256

Revenue—Rs. 2,25,000

Salute in guns—11

Baraundha (Pathar Kachar)—Raja Gaya
Parshad Singh, Raja of—

Date of birth—1865

Date of succession—9th July '09

Area in sq. miles—218

Population—15,912

Revenue—Rs. 45,000 nearly

Salute in guns—9

Barwani—His Highness Rana Devisinghji

Date of birth—19th July '22

Date of Succession—21st April '30

Area in sq. miles—1,178

Population—1,76,632

Revenue—Rs. 11,04,510

Salute in guns—11

Bhopal—Lt. Col. H. H. Iftikhar-ul-Mulk

Sikandar Saulat Nawab Haji Muham-
mad Hamidulla Khan Bahadur,

G.C.I.E., G.C.S.I., C.V.O., Nawab of—

Date of birth—9th September 1894

Date of succession—17th May '26

Area in sq. miles—7,000

Population—700,000

Revenue—Rs. 62,10,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Bhopal (Victoria)

Lancers—141; Bhopal Sultania

Infantry—772; Bhopal Gohar-i-Taj

Own Company—164

Salute in guns—19

Bijawar—H. H. Maharaja Govind Singh
Minor, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—17th June '34

Date of succession—11th Nov. '41

Area in sq. miles—973

Population—1,20,928

Revenue—Rs. 3,55,278

Salute in guns—11

Charkhari—H. H. Maharajadhiraja
Sipahdar-ul-Mulk Armardan Singh Ju
Deo Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—29th December '03

Date of succession—6th October '20

Area in sq. miles—880

Population—123,405

Revenue—Rs. 8,26,000 nearly

Salute in guns—11

Chhatarpur—H. H. Maharaja Bhawani
Singh Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—16th August, '04

Date of succession—5th April, '32

Area in sq. miles—1,130

Population—1,61,267

Gross Revenue Nearly—Rs. 12,00,000

Indian State Forces—412

Salute in guns—11

Datia—Major H. H. Maharaja Lokendra
Sir Govind Singh Bahadur, K.C.S.I.,

Date of birth—21st June 1886

Date of succession—5th August '07

Area in sq. miles—911

Population—148,659

Revenue—Rs. 19,00,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Datia 1st Govind—
Infantry—200

Datia Govind Infantry (B Company)—117

Salute in guns—15

Dewas (Senior)—His Highness Maharaja
Sir Vikramsinha Rao Puar, K.C.S.I.,

B.A., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—4th April '10

Date of succession—21st December '37

Area in sq. miles—449.50

Population—89,479

Revenue—Rs. 7,00,000

Salute in guns—15

Dewas (Junior Branch)—H. H. Maharaja
Sadashivrao Khase Saheb Pawar,
Maharaja of—

Date of birth—13th August 1887

Date of succession—4th February '34

Area in sq. miles—419

Population—70,513

Revenue—Rs. 6,83,000

Salute in guns—15

Dhar—Lieut. H. H. Maharaja Anand Rao
Puar Saheb Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—34th November, '20

Date of succession—1st August '26

Date of Investiture—16th March, '40

Area in sq. miles—1,799.34

Population—2,53,210

Revenue Rs. 3,000,000

Indian State Forces—Dhar Light Horse
66; Dhar Infantry (Laxmi Guard) 263

Salute in guns—15

Indore—H. H. Maharajadhiraja Raj
Rajeshwar Sawai Shri Yeshwant Rao
Holkar Bahadur, G.C.I.E., Maharaja of,

Date of birth—6th September '08

Date of succession—26th February '26

Area in sq. miles—9,902

Population—over 15,00,000

Revenue—Rs. 1,21,81,100

Indian State Forces—Indore Holkar
Escort—141, Indore 1st Battalion,

Maharaja Holkar's Infantry Companies
"A" & "B"—380

Indore Holkar Transport Corps—266.
Salute in guns—19

Jaora—Lt. Col. H. H. Fakhrud-Daulah
Nawab Sir Mohammad Itikhar Ali
Khan Bahadur, Saulat-i-Jang, G.B.E.,
K.C.I.E., Nawab of—

Date of birth—17th January 1883
Date of succession—6th March 1895
Area in sq. miles—601
Population—1,16,738
Revenue—Rs. 16,00,000
Salute in guns—13

Jhabua—H. H. Raja Udai Sing, Raja of—
Date of birth—6th May 1875
Date of succession—26th April 1895
Area in sq. miles—1,336
Population—123,932
Revenue—Rs. 3,50,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Khilechipur—Raja Rao Bahadur Sir
Durlansingh K.C.I.E., Raja of—
Date of birth—26th August 1897
Date of succession—19th January '08
Area in sq. miles—273
Population—45,625
Revenue—Rs. 2,42,000
Salute in guns—9

Maihar—H. H. Raja Sir Brijnath Singhji
Deo Bahadur, K.C.I.E. Raja of—
Date of birth—22nd February 1896
Date of succession—16th Dec. '11
Area in sq. miles—407
Population—68,991
Revenue—Rs. 5,00,000 (nearly)
Salute in guns—9

Nagod—(Unchehra)—H. H. Raja Mahendra
Singhjee Deo Bahadur, Raja of—
Date of birth—5th February '16
Date of succession—26th Feb. '26
Area in sq. miles—501'4
Population—87,911
Revenue—Rs. 3,00,000 (nearly)
Salute in guns—9

Narsingharh—H. H. Raja Sir Vikram
Singhji Sahib Bdr. K.C.I.E. Raja of—
Date of birth—21 Sept. '09
Date of succession—23rd April '24
Area in sq. miles—734
Population—1,24,281
Revenue—Rs. 7,09,291 (nearly).
Salute in guns—11

Oreha—H. H. Saramad-i-Rajaha-Bundel-
khand Shri Sawai Sir Vir Singh Dev
Bahadur, K.C.S.I. Maharaja of—
Date of birth—14th April 1899
Date of succession—4th March '30
Area in sq. miles—2,080
Population—314,661
Revenue—Rs. 13,00,000 (nearly)
Salute in guns—15

Paana—H. H. Maharaja Mahendra Sir
Yadvendra Singh Bahadur, K.C.S.I.,
K.C.I.E., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—31st January 1894
Date of succession—20th June '02
Area in sq. miles—2,596
Population—2,12,130
Revenue—Rs. 9,50,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Rajgarh—H. H. Raja Rawat Bikramaditya
Singh Bahadur (minor), Raja of—
Date of birth—18th December '36
Date of succession—Do Do
Area in sq. miles—962
Population—1,48,609
Revenue—Rs. 8,63,200
Salute in guns—11

Ratlam—Major-General H. H. Maharaja
Sir Sajjan Singh, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.,
K.C.V.O.

Date of birth—13th January 1880
Date of succession—29th Jan. 1893
Area in sq. miles—693
Population—1,26,117
Revenue—Rs. 10 lacs
Indian State Forces—Shree Lokendra
Rifles—Authorised Strength—161
Salute in guns—13 permanent, local 15

Rewa—H. H. Maharaja Dhiraj Sir Gulab
Singh Bahadur, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.,
Maharaja of—
Date of birth—12th March '03
Date of succession—31st October '18
Area in sq. miles—13,000
Population—13,20,306
Salute in guns—17
Revenue—Rs. 60,00,000

Sallana—H. H. Raja Sahib Sir Dileep
Singhji Bahadur, K.C.I.E., Raja of—
Date of birth—18th March 1891
Date of succession—14th July '19
Area in sq. miles—297
Population—40,228
Revenue—Rs. 3,00,000
Indian State Forces—1. Cavalry 30;
2. Infantry 44; 3. Police 130
Salute in guns—11

Samthar—H. H. Maharaja Sir Bir Singh
Deo Bahadur, K.C.I.E., Raja of—
Date of birth—26th August 1864
Date of succession—17th June 1896
Area in sq. miles—180
Population—33,216
Revenue—Rs. 3,50,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Sitmau—H. H. Raja Sir Ram Singh,
K.C.I.E., Raja of—
Date of birth—2nd January 1890
Area in sq. miles—201
Population—26,549
Revenue—Rs. 2,55,076
Salute in guns—11

Gwalior State

Gwalior—H. H. Maharaja Mukhtar-ul-
Mulk, Azim-ul-Iqtidar, Rafi-ush-Shan,

Wala Shikoh, Motasham-i-Dauran,
Umdat-ul-Umra, Maharajadhiraja
Alijah, Hisamud-Salta-nat George
Jayaji Rao Scindia, Bahadur, Srinath,
Mansur-i-Zaman, Fidwi-i-Hazrat-i-
Malik-Muazzam-i-Raf-ud-Darjat-i-
Inglistan, Maharaja of—
Date of birth—26th June '16
Date of succession—5th June '25
Area in sq. miles—26,367
Population—3,523,070
Revenue—Rs. 241'81 lacs nearly
Indian State Forces—

Gwalior 1st Yajaji Lancers—526
" 2nd Alijah —526
" 3rd Maharaja Madho Rao
Scindia's Own Lancers—526
" 1st Maharani Sakhya Raya's
Own Battalion—763
" 2nd Maharaja Jayaji Rao's
Own Battalion—765
" 3rd Maharaja Scindia's Own
Battalion—772
" 4th Maharaja Bahadur Battalion
—772
" 7th Scindia's Battalion (Train-
ing)—488
" Mountain Battery—260
" Scindia's House Artillery—138
" Sappers Artillery—178
" Pony Transport Corps—479
Salute in guns—21

Hyderabad State

Hyderabad—Lt.-General H. E. H. Asaf
Jah Muzaffar-ul-Mulk wai Mamalik,
Nizam-ul-Mulk Nizam-ud-Daula,
Nawab Sir Mir Usman Ali Khan
Bahadur, Fateh Jang, Faithful Ally
of the British Government, G.C.S.I.,
G.B.E., Nizam of—
Date of birth—6th April 1886
Date of succession—29th August '11
Area in sq. miles—100,465
Population—17,877,986
Revenue—Rs. 894'98 lacs
Indian State Forces—Hyderabad 1st
Imperial Service Lancers, 544
Hyderabad 2nd Imperial Service
Lancers, 544
Salute in guns—21

Jammu & Kashmir State

Jammu & Kashmir—Lieut-General H. H.
Raj Rajeshwar Maharajadhiraj Maha-
raja Shri Harisinghji Bahadur, Indar
Mahindar, Spar-i-Saltanat-i-Englishia,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., K.O.V.O., L.L.D., Maha-
raja of—
Date of birth—September 1895
Date of succession—September 25
Area in sq. miles—84,471
Population—40,21,616
Revenue—Rs. 257'92 lacs
Indian States Forces—

1. 1st Line Troops (Fighting Service)
Jammu and Kashmir Body Guard
Cavalry—653
2. 1st Jammu & Kashmir Mountain
Battery 314
3. 2nd Jammu & Kashmir Mountain
Battery 262
4. 1st " " " Infantry 679
5. 2nd " " " Rifles 690
6. 3rd " " " 679
7. 4th " " " Infantry 690
8. 5th " " " Light " 679
9. 6th " " " " " 772
10. 7th " " " " " 690
11. 8th " " " " " 679
12. 9th " " " " " 679
1st Line (Troops Administrative Service)
13. J. & L. A. T. C. 365
14. Jammu & Kashmir Infantry
Training Battalion 1969
15. Jammu & Kashmir Army
Training School 26
16. Auxiliary Service
17. Jammu & Kashmir Military
Transport 299
18. Jammu & Kashmir State Band 68
19. " Fort Dept. 117
20. Military Veterinary Corps 21
21. Military Medical Corps 40
Salute in guns—21

Banganapalle—H. H. Nawab Saiyid Fazle
Ali Khan Bahadur, Nawab of—
Date of Birth—9th November '01
Date of succession—22nd January '22
Area in sq. miles—275
Population—44,631
Revenue—Rs. 3,53,758
Salute in guns—9

Cochin—H. H. Sir Kerala Varma, Maha-
raja of—
Date of birth—29th Vrischigon 1039 M. E.
Date of succession—13th April '41
Area in sq. miles—1480
Population—1,422,875
Revenue—Rs. 1,21,46,238
Indian State Forces—34 officers and
370 men
Salute in guns—17

Pudukkottai—H. H. Sri Brihadamba Das
Raja Rajagopala Tondaiman Bahadur,
Date of birth—23rd June '22
Date of succession—24th October '28
Area in sq. miles—1,179
Population—4,38,348
Revenue—Rs. 20,74,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Travancore—H. H. Sir Padmanabha
Dasa Vanchi Pala Rama Varma
Kulasekhara Kiritapati Manney Sultan
Maharaja Raja Ramaraja Bahadur
Shamsher Jang, G.C.I.E., Maharaja of—
Date of birth—7th November '12
Date of succession—1st September '24

Area in sq. miles—7,661.75

Population—6,070,018

Revenue—Rs. 280.73 lakhs

Salute in guns—19; Local 21

Mysore—H. H. Maharaja Sri Chamaraja Wadiar Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—18th July '19

Date of succession—8th September '40

Area in sq. miles—29,493

Population—73.29 lakhs including Civil & Military Station, Bangalore

Revenue—Rs. 4,65,68,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Mysore Lancers 495; Horse 186; Bodyguard 125;

1st Infantry 772; 2nd Infantry 1180;

Palace Guard 500

Salute in guns—21

Punjab States

Bahawalpur—Major His Highness Rukn-ud-Daula, Nusrat-i-Jang, Saif-ud-Daula, Hafiz-ul-Mulk, Mukhlis-ud-Daula, Wa-Muinud-Daula Nawab Al-Haj Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan V Abbasi, Bahadur, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., Nawab Ruler of—

Date of birth—30th September '04

Date of succession—4th March '07

Area in sq. miles—22,000

Population—Over one million

Revenue—Rs. 1,40,00,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Bahawalpur 1st Sadiq Infantry; Bahawalpur 2nd

Haroon Infantry; H. H. the Nawab's

Own Body Guard Lancers

Salute in guns—17

Bilaspur—(Kahlur)—H. H. Raja Anand Chand, Raja of—

Date of birth—28th January '13

Date of succession—18th Nov. '27

Area in sq. miles—448

Population—1,10,000

Revenue—Rs. 3,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—11

Chamba—H. H. Raja Lakshman Singh, the Ruler of Chamba State (minor)

Date of birth—8th December '24

Date of succession—7th Dec. '35

Area in sq. miles—3,127

Population—16,89,38

Revenue—Rs. 9,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—11

Council of Administration appointed by the Government to carry on Minority Administration. President—Lt.—Col. H. S. Strong, C.I.E. Vice-President & Chief Secretary—Dewan Bahadur Lala Madho Ram. Member—Rai Bahadur Lala Ghanshyam Dass.

Faridkot—Lt. H. H. Farzand-i-Saadat

Nisban-i-Hazrat-i-Kaisar-i-Hind Barar

Bans Raja Har Indar Singh Bahadur,

Date of birth—29th January '15

Date of succession—23rd December '18

Area in sq. miles—643

Population—164,346

Revenue—Rs. 17,00,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Faridkot Sappers—Headquarters 8. (Field Company)

Sappers & Miners 129. Bodyguard

Lancers 27. Infantry 112. Band 85

Salute in guns—11

Jind—Colonel H. H. Farzand-i-Dilband Rasikh-ul-Itikad Daulat-i-Inglishta

Raja-Rajgan Maharaja Sir Ranbir

Singh, Rajendra Bahadur, G.C.I.E.

G.C.S.I., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—11th October 1879

Date of succession—7th March 1887

Area in sq. miles—1,259

Population—308,183

Revenue—Rs. 28,00,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—

Salute in guns—13

Kapurthala—Colonel His Highness

Farzand-i-Dilband Rasikh-ul-Itkad

Daulat-i-Inglishta Raja-i-Rajgan

Maharaja Sir Jagatjit Singh Bahadur,

G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—24th November 1872

Date of succession—5th September 1877

Area in sq. miles—652

Population—3,78,380

Revenue—Rs. 34,00,000 roughly

Salute in guns—13

Loharu—Capt. H. H. Nawab Mirza Amin-ud-Din Ahmed, Fakhar-ud-Daula

Khan Bahadur, Nawab of—

Date of birth—23rd March 11

Date of succession—30th Oct. '26

Area in sq. miles—222

Population—27,892

Revenue—Rs. 1,33,000 nearly

Salute in guns—9

Malerkotla—Lt.—Colonel H. H. Nawab Sir Ahmad Ali Khan, Bahadur, K.C.S.I.,

K.C.I.E., Nawab of—

Date of birth—10th September 1881

Date of succession—23rd August '08

Area in sq. miles—168

Population—80,322

Revenue—Rs. 15,61,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Sappers—Headquarters 16; Lancers (Bodyguard) 40;

infantry 226; Field Company Sappers

& Miners 295

Salute in guns—11

Mandi—Major H. H. Raja Sir Joginder Sen Bahadur, K.C.S.I., Raja of—

Date of birth—20th August '04

Date of succession—28th April '13

Area in sq. miles—1,200

Population—2,07,465

Revenue—Rs. 12,50,000 nearly

Salute in guns—11

Nabha—H. H. Farzand-i-Arjmand,
Aquadat-Paiwand-i-Daulat-i-Inglishia,
Barar Bans, Sarmur Raja-i-Rajagan
Maharaja Pratap Singha Malvendra
Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—21st September '19
Date of succession—February '28
Area in sq. miles—928
Population—263,334
Revenue—Rs. 24,05,000 nearly
Salute in guns—13

Patiala—Dr. H. H. Farzand-i-Khas
Daulat-i-Inglishia Mansur-ul-Zaman,
Amir-ul-Umra Maharajadhiraj Raj
Rajeshwar Shri Maharaja-i-Rajgan
Shri Yadavindra Singhji, LL.D.,
Mahendra Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—7th January '13
Date of succession—23rd March '38
Area in sq. miles—5,932
Population—1,625,520
Revenue—Rs. 1,57,00,000
Indian State Forces—

Combatants : Non-Combatants

1. 1st Rajindar Lancers	475	178
2. 2nd Patiala Lancers	212	85
3. War Strength 2nd P. Lrs.	60	0
4. P. H. A.	90	28
5. 1st R. S. Infantry	732	66
6. 2nd Yadavendra „	665	61
7. 3rd P. S.	662	51
8. 4th Patiala „	662	51
9. Training Battalion	635	45
10. Patiala Transports Corps	99	33
11. S. M. Vety. Hospital	5	9
12. Army Trg. School	39	10
13. Patiala Wireless Section	46	6
14. Deputy Company	227	10

4609 633

Salute in guns—17

Sirmur (Nahan)—H. H. Lt. Maharaja
Rajendra Prakash Bdr. Maharaja of—

Date of birth—10th January '13
Date of succession—Nov. '33
Area in sq. miles—1,141
Population—1,43,568
Revenue—Rs. 10,00,000 nearly
Indian State Forces—Sappers—Head-
quarters 5; Band 23; No. 1 Company
142; No. 2 Company 155; State Body-
guard Lancers 31
Salute in guns—11

Suket—H. H. Raja Lakshman Sen, Raja of
Date of birth—1894
Date of succession—13th Oct. '19
Area in sq. miles—420
Population—54,328
Revenue—Rs. 2,67,000 nearly
Salute in guns—11

Bashahr—H. H. Raja Padam Singh,

Date of birth—1873
Date of succession—5th August '14
Area in sq. miles—3,820
Population—86,077
Revenue—Rs. 3,34,600 nearly
Salute in guns—9

Rajputana States

Alwar—H. H. Shri Sewai Maharaj Tej
Singhji Bahadur, Maharaja of—

Date of birth—19th March '11
Date of succession—22nd July '37
Area in sq. miles—3217
Population—7,49,751
Revenue—About Rs. 40,00,000
Indian State Forces—1. Jey Paltan
Infantry 865; 2. Pratap Paltan Infantry
331; 3. Alwar Mangal Lancers 158; 4.
Garrison Force 28
Salute in guns—15

Banswara—H. H. Rai-i-Rayau Maharawal
Sahib Shri Sir Pirthi Singhji Bahadur,
K.C.I.R. Maharawal of—

Date of birth—15th July 1888
Date of succession—8th January '14
Area in sq. miles—1,946
Population—2,99,913
Revenue—Rs. 8,17,726
Salute in guns—15

Bharatpur—Lt. Col. H. H. Maharaja Sri
Brajindra Sawai Sir Krishna Singh
Bahadur, Bahadur Jang, K.C.S.I.,

Date of birth—4th October 1899
Date of succession—27th August 1900
Area in sq. miles—1,982
Population—4,96,437
Revenue—Rs. 34,25,000 nearly
Indian State Forces—Jaswant House-
hold Infantry—772; 2nd Ram Singh's
Own Infantry—353; 3rd Baretha
Infantry—353
Salute in guns—17

Bikaner—General H. H. Maharajadhiraj
Rajeswar Narendra Shiromani Maha-
rajah Sri Ganga Singhji Bahadur,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., G.B.E., K.C.B.,
A.-D.-C., LL.D., Maharajah of—

Date of birth—13th Oct. 1880
Date of succession—31st Aug. 1887
Area in sq. miles—23,317
Population—1,293,000
Revenue—Rs. 1,58,11,000
Indian State Forces—

Ganga Risala (Camel Corps)	532
Sadul Light Infantry	773
Dungar Lancers	
(including H. H.'s Body Guard	342
Bijey Battery	245
Camel Battery	20
Artillery Training Centre	158
2nd Battalion, Bikaner State Infantry	687

3rd Battalion, Bikaner State Infantry 362
 Training Battalion 413
 Motor Machine Gun Sections 100
 Salute in guns—Personal 19, Permanent 17.

Bundi—His Highness Hadendra Siromani
 Deo Sar Buland Raj Maharajadhiraj
 Saheb Bahadur, G.C.I.E.
 Date of birth—8th March 1893
 Date of succession—8th August '27
 Area in sq. miles—2,220
 Population—2,49,374
 Revenue—Rs. 15,50,000
 Salute in guns—17

Dholpur—Lt.-Col. H. H. Rais-ud-Daula
 Sipahdar-ul-Mulk Maharajadhiraja
 Sri Sawai Maharaj-Rana Sir Udaibhan
 Singh Lokindar Bahadur Diler Jang
 Jai Deo, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., Maharaj-
 Raja of—
 Date of birth—25th February 1893
 Date of succession—29th March '11
 Area in sq. miles—1,200
 Population—231,188
 Revenue—Rs. 17,50,000 nearly
 Indian State Forces—Dholpur Narsingh
 Infantry 164; Dholpur Sappers and
 Miners 75
 Salute in guns—15

Dungarpur—H. H. Rai-i-Rayan Mahi-
 mahendra Maharajadhiraj Maharawal
 Sri Lakshman Singhji Bahadur,
 K.C.S.I., Maharawal of—
 Date of birth—7th Mar. '08
 Date of succession—15th Nov. '18
 Area in sq. miles—1,460
 Population—2,74,282
 Revenue—Rs. 8,00,000
 Salute in guns—15

Jaipur—H. H. Saramad-i-Rajaha-i
 Hindustan Raj Rajindra Sri Maha-
 rajadhiraja Sir Sawai Man Singh
 Bahadur, G.C.I.E., Maharaja of—
 Date of birth—21st August '11
 Date of succession—7th September '22
 Area in sq. miles—16,682
 Population—26,31,775
 Revenue—Rs. 1,35,00,000 nearly
 Indian State Forces—Jaipur Infantry—772
 Jaipur Lancers—526; Trpt. Corps—570
 Salute in guns—17

Jaisalmer—H. H. Maharajadhiraj Raj
 Rajeshwar Param Bhattarak Sri
 Maharawalji Sir Jawahir Singhji Deb
 Bahadur Yadukul Chandrabhal
 Rukan-ud-Daula, Muzaffar Jang,
 Bijaiman K.C.S.I., Ruler of—
 Date of birth—18th Nov. 1882
 Date of succession—26th June '14
 Area in sq. miles—16,062

Population—93,246
 Salute in guns—15

Jhalawar—H. H. Dharmadivakar Praja-
 vatsal Patit-pawn Maharaj Rana Shri
 Sir Rajendra Singh Ji Dev Bahadur,
 K.C.S.I. Maharaj Rana of—
 Date of birth—15th July 1900
 Date of succession—13th April '29
 Area in sq. miles—813
 Population—1,22,375
 Salute in guns—13

Jodhpur—Air Commodore His Highness
 Raj Rajeswar Saramad-i-Rajai-Hind
 Maharajadhiraj Shri Sir Umaid Singhji
 Sahib Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., K.C.V.O.,
 A.D.C., LLD., Maharaja of—
 Date of birth—8th July '03
 Ascended the throne—3rd October, '18
 Area—36,071 sq. miles
 Population—21,34,848
 Revenue—Rs. 167,71,521
 Indian State Forces—
 Jodhpur Sardar Rissala—508; Jodhpur
 Training Squadron—147; Jodhpur Sar-
 dar Infantry, including Training Coy,
 (163) and State Military Band (39)—
 864; 2nd Jodhpur Infantry—669; Jodh-
 pur Mule Troops—80; Fort Guard—94;
 Salute in guns—17

Karauli—H. H. Maharaja Sir Bhompal
 Deo Bahadur Yadukul Chandra Bhal,
 K.C.S.I., Maharaja of—
 Date of birth—18th June 1886
 Date of succession—21st August '27
 Area in sq. miles—1,242
 Population—1,52,413
 Estimated Gross Revenue—6,28,000
 Salute in guns—17

Kishengarh—H. H. Umdae Rajhae
 Baland Makan Maharajadhiraja Maha-
 raja Sumair Singhji Sahib Bahadur,
 (Minor) Maharaja of—
 Date of birth—27th January '29
 Date of succession—24th April '39
 Area in sq. miles—868
 Population—1,04,155
 Revenue—Rs. 7,50,000
 Salute in guns—15

Kotah—Colonel H. H. Maharao Sir Umed
 Singh Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E.,
 Maharao of—
 Date of birth—15th September 1872
 Date of succession—11th June 1889
 Area in sq. miles—5,684
 Population—6,85,804
 Revenue—Rs. 5368 lacs
 Salute in guns—19

Pratabgarh—H. H. Maharawat Sir Ram-
 singhji Bahadur, K.C.I.E., Maharawat of
 Date of birth—'08

Date of succession—'29

Area in sq. miles—889

Population—91,967

Revenue—Rs. 5,82,000 nearly

Salute in guns—15

Shahpura—H. H. Rajadhiraj Umaid
Singhji, Raja of—

Date of birth—7th March 1876

Date of succession—24th June '32

Area in sq. miles—405

Population—61,173

Revenue—Rs. 336,762 nearly

Salute in guns—9

Stroht—H. H. Maharajadhiraj Maharao
Sir Sarup Ram Singh Bahadur,
G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I. Maharao of—

Date of birth—27th Sept. 1888

Date of succession—23rd April '20

Area in sq. miles—1,994

Population—2,33,870

Revenue—Rs. 11,48,771

Salute in guns—15

Tonk—H. H. Said-ud-daula Wazir-ul-
Mulk Nawab Hafiz Sir Mohammad
Sadat Ali Khan Bahadur Sowlat-i-
Jung, G.C.I.E. Nawab of—

Date of birth—13th February, 1879

Date of succession—23rd June '30

Area in sq. miles—2,553

Population—3,53,687

Revenue—Rs. 19,30,000 B. C. nearly

Salute in guns—17

Udaipur (Mewar)—Lt. Col. H. H. Maha-
rajadhiraja Maharana Shri Sir Bhopal
Singhji Bahadur, G.C.S.I., Maharana of—

Date of birth—22nd February 1884

Date of succession—24th May '30

Area in sq. miles—12,753

Population—1,925,000

Revenue—Rs. 80,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—19

Sikkim State

Sikkim—H. H. Maharaja Sir Tashi

Namgyal, K.C.I.E., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—1893

Date of succession—5th Dec. '14

Area in sq. miles—2,818

Population—81,721

Revenue—Rs. 4,33,000 nearly

Salute in guns—15

United Provinces States

Benares—H. H. Maharaja Vibhuti Narayan
Singh Bahadur (minor), Maharaja of—

Date of birth—5th November '27

Date of succession—5th April, '39

Area in sq. miles—875

Population—451,327

Revenue—Rs. 30,42,921 nearly

Salute in guns—13 (Local 15)

Rampur—Captain H. H. Alijah Farzand-
i-Dilpazir-i-Daulat-i-Inglishia Mukhlis.

ud-Daula Nasir-ul-Mulk, Amir-ul-
Umara, Nawab Sir Saiyid Mohammad
Raza Ali Khan Bahadur Mustaid

Jung, K.C.S.I., Nawab of—

Date of birth—17th Nov. '06

Date of succession—20th June '30

Area in sq. miles—892.54

Population—464,919

Revenue—Rs. 51,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—15

Tehri (Garhwal)—Lt. Colonel H. H.

Maharaja Narendra Shah, K.C.S.I., of—

Date of birth—3rd Aug. 1898

Date of succession—25th April '13

Area in sq. miles—4,562

Population—3,18,482

Revenue—Rs. 18,30,000 nearly

Indian State Forces—Tehri H. Q.

Infantry and Band—100

Tehri Pioneers Narendra—101

" Sappers and Miners—129

Salute in guns—11

Western India States

Bhavnagar—Lt. H. H. Sir Krishna-
kumersinhji Bhavsinghji, K.C.S.I.,
Maharaja of—

Date of birth—19th May '12

Date of succession—18th July '19

Area in sq. miles—2,961

Population—5,00,274

Revenue—Rs. 109,68,620

Indian State Forces—Bhavnagar Lancers

—270; Bhavnagar Infantry—219

Salute in guns—13

Cutch—H. H. Maharajadhiraj Mirza
Maharao Shri Sir Khengarji, Sawai
Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. Maharao of—

Date of birth—23rd Aug. 1866

Date of succession—1st Jan. 1876

Area in sq. miles—8,249.5

Population—5,00,800

Revenue—Rs. 31,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—17 Perm. 19 Local

Dhrangadhra—Major H. H. Maharaja
Shri Ghanshyamsinhji Ajitsinhji,
G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—31st May 1889

Date of succession—February '11

Area in sq. miles—1,167

Population—95,946

Revenue—Rs. 25,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—13

Dhrol—H. H. Thakor Saheb Shri Chan-
drasinhji Saheb, Thakor Saheb of—

Date of birth—28 Aug. '12

Date of succession—20th Oct. '39

Area in sq. miles—282.7

Population—27,639

Revenue—Rs. 289,281

Salute in guns—9

Gondal—H. H. Maharaja Shri Bhaga-

vatsinhji Sagramji G.C.S.I. G.C.I.E.
Maharaja of—

Date of birth—24th. Oct. 1865
 Date of succession—14th Dec. 1869
 Area in sq. miles—1,024
 Population—2,05,846
 Revenue—Rs. 50,00,000 nearly
 Salute in guns—11

Junagadh—Captain H. H. Nawab Sir
Mahabatkhanji, Rasulkhanji K.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E., Nawab of—

Date of birth—2nd Aug. 1900
 Date of succession—22nd Jan. '11
 Area in sq miles—3,336.9
 Population—545,152
 Revenue—Rs. 1,00,00,000
 Indian State Forces—Junagadh Lancers
 —173 : Junagadh Mahabatkhanji
 Infantry 201
 Salute in guns—15

Limbdi—Thakor Saheb Shri L. Chhatra-
salji Digvijaysinhji, Thakor Saheb of—

Date of birth—19th Feb. '04
 Date of succession—6th Jan. '41
 Area in sq. miles—343.96
 (exclusive of about 207 sq miles in
 the Collectorate of the Ahmedabad).
 Population—44,000 nearly
 Revenue—Rs. 7,00,000 nearly
 Salute in guns—9

Morvi—H. H. Maharaja Shri Lakhdirji
Waghji, G.B.E., K.C.S.I., Maharaja of—

Date of birth—26th Dec. 1876
 Date of succession—11th Jan. '22
 Area in sq. miles—822
 Population—112,023
 Revenue—Rs. 50 lacs nearly
 Salute in guns—11

Nawanagar—Lt. Col. H. H. Maharaja Jam
Shri Sir Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji
Jadeja, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., AD.C., Maha-
raja Jam Sahib of—

Date of birth—1st Sept. 1895
 Date of succession—2nd April '33
 Area in sq. miles—3,791
 Population—5,04,006
 Revenue—Rs. 94,00,000 nearly
 Salute in guns—15

Palanpur—Lt. Colonel H. H. Nawab Shri
Taley Muhammad Khan Bahadur.
G.C.I.E., K.C.V.O., Nawab Sahib of—

Date of birth—7th July 1883
 Date of succession—28th Sept. '18
 Area in sq. miles—1,774.64
 Population—3,15,855
 Revenue—Rs. 11,64,987
 Salute in guns—13

Palitana—H. H. Thakor Saheb Shri Baha-
dursinhji Mansinhji K.C.I.E., K.C.S.I.,
Thakor Saheb of—

Date of birth—3rd April '00
 Date of succession—29th Aug. '05

Area in sq. miles—288

Population—62,150

Revenue—Rs. 9,00,000 nearly

Salute in guns—9

Porbandar—Captain H. H. Maharaja Shri-
Sir Natwarsinhji, Bhabsinhji K.C.S.I.,
Maharaja Rana Saheb of—

Date of birth—30 June '01
 Date of succession—10th Dec. '08
 Area in sq. miles—642.25
 Population—1,46,648
 Revenue—Rs. 26,00,000 nearly
 Salute in guns—13

Radhanpur—H. H. Nawab Saheb Murta-
zakhan Jorawarkhan Babi Bahadur
Nawab of—

Date of birth—10th Oct. 1899
 Date of succession—7th April '37
 Area in sq. miles—1,150
 Population—70,530
 Revenue Rs. 8,00,00 to 10,00,000
 Salute in guns—11

Rajkot—H. H. Thakor Saheb Shri Pradu-
mnasinhji, Thakor Saheb of—

Date of birth—24th Feb. '13
 Date of succession—17th August '40
 Area in sq. miles—2824
 Population—1,03,033
 Revenue—Rs. 13,40,872 nearly
 Salute in guns—9

Wadhwan—H. H. Thakore Saheb Shri
Surendrasinhji, Thakore Saheb of—

Date of birth—4th January. '22
 Date of succession—27th July '34
 Area. 242.6 sq. miles excluding the area
 in the British Indian District of
 Ahmedabad.

Population—50,934
 Revenue—Rs. 6 Lacs
 Salute—Permanent 9 guns

Wankaner—Captain H. H. Maharana
Shri Sir Amarsinhji, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.,
Maharana Rajsaheb of—

Date of birth—4th January 1879
 Date of succession—12th June 1881
 Area in sq. miles—417
 Population—55,024
 Revenue—Rs. 7,67,000
 Salute in guns—11

Indian States (without Salute)

Baluchistan State

Las Bela—Mir Ghulam Muhammed
Khan Jam of—

Date of birth—December 1895
 Date of succession—March '21
 Area in sq. miles—7,132
 Population—50,696
 Revenue—Rs. 3,78,000 nearly

Bihar & Orissa States

Athgarh—Raja Sreekoran Radhanath

Bebarta Patnaik, Raja of—
 Date of Birth—28th Nov. '09
 Date of succession—22nd June '18
 Area in sq. miles—168
 Population—55,508
 Revenue—Rs. 1,76,000

Athmalik—Raja Kishor Chandra Deo
 Date of birth—10th November '04
 Date of succession—3rd November '18
 Area in sq. miles—730
 Population—59,749
 Revenue—Rs. 1,81,000 nearly

Bamra—Raja Bhanuganga Tribhuman Deb, Raja of—
 Date of birth—25th February, '14
 Date of succession—1st January '20
 Area in square miles—1,988
 Population—1,34,721
 Revenue—Rs. 5,81,000 nearly

Baramba—Raja Sree Narayan Chandra Birbar Mangraj Mahapatra, Raja of—
 Date of birth—10th January '14
 Date of succession—20th August '22
 Area in sq. miles—142
 Population—52,924
 Revenue—Rs. 1,03,000 nearly

Baud—Raja Narayan Prasad Deo of—
 Date of birth—14th March '04
 Date of succession—10th March '13
 Area in sq. miles—1,264
 Population—124,411
 Revenue—Rs. 2,72,000 nearly

Bonai—Raja Indra Deo, Raja of—
 Date of birth—6th January 1884
 Date of succession—19th February '02
 Area in square miles—1,296
 Population—68,178
 Revenue—Rs. 2,36,000 nearly

Daspalla—Raja Kishore Chandra Deo
 Date of birth—16th April '08
 Date of succession—11th December '13
 Area in square miles—568
 Population—53,833
 Revenue—Rs. 1,41,993

Dhenkanal—Raja Sankar Mahendra Bahadur, Raja of—
 Date of birth—5th November '04
 Date of succession—16th Oct. '18
 Area in square miles—1,463
 Population—2,33,691
 Revenue—Rs. 5,13,000 nearly

Gangpur—Raja Bhawani Shankar Sekhar
 Date of birth—14th May '1898
 Date of succession—10th June '17
 Area in square miles—2,492
 Population—3,09,271
 Revenue—Rs. 6,76,000 nearly

Hindol—Raja Bahadur Naba Kishor Chandra Singh Mardraj Jagadeb, M.B.A.S., F.R.S.A., Raja of—
 Date of birth—14th June 1891

Date of succession—10th February '06
 Area in sq. miles—312
 Population—48,896
 Revenue—Rs. 1,45,000

Keonjhar—Raja Shri Balabhadra Narayan Ehanj Deo, Ruler of—
 Date of birth—26th December '05
 Date of succession—12th August '26
 Area in sq. miles—3,217
 Population—529,786
 Revenue—Rs. 15'56 lakhs nearly

Khandpara—Raja Harihar Singh, Mardraj Bhramarbar Ray, Raja of—
 Date of birth—26th August '14
 Date of succession—26th December '22
 Area in sq. miles—244
 Population—64,289
 Revenue—Rs. 1,22,000

Kharsawan—Raja Sriram Chandra Singh
 Date of birth—4th July 1892
 Date of succession—6th February '02
 Area in sq. miles—157
 Population—44,805
 Revenue—Rs. 1,18,000 nearly

Narsinghpur—Raja Ananta Narayan Mansingh Harichandan Mahapatra
 Date of birth—9th September '08
 Date of succession—5th July '21
 Area in sq. miles—207
 Population—48,448
 Revenue—Rs. 1,29,000

Nayagarh—Raja Krishna Chandra Singh Mandhata, Raja of—
 Date of birth—15th August '11
 Date of succession—7th Dec. '18
 Area in sq. miles—552
 Population—1,61,409
 Revenue—Rs. 3,92,210

Nilgiri—Raja Kishore Chandra Mardraj Harichandan, Raja of—
 Date of birth—2nd Feb. '04
 Date of succession—6th July '13
 Area in sq. miles—284
 Population—73,109
 Revenue—Rs. 2,14,589

Pal Lahara—Raja Muni Pal, Raja of—
 Date of birth—26th November '03
 Date of succession—18th April '13
 Area in sq. miles—452
 Population—23,229
 Revenue—Rs. 75,000 nearly

Rafrakhol—Raja Bir Chandra Jadumani
 Date of birth—1894
 Date of succession—3rd July '06
 Area in sq. miles—833
 Population—31,225
 Revenue—Rs. 75,000 nearly

Ranpur—Raja Birbar Krishna Chandra Mahapatra, Raja of—
 Date of birth—About 1887
 Date of succession—12th July 1899

Area in sq. miles—203

Population—41,282

Revenue—Rs. 65,000

Seraikella—Raja Aditya Pratap Singh
Deo, Ruler of—

Date of birth—30th July, 1887

Date of succession—9th Dec. '31

Area in sq. miles—449

Population—156,374

Revenue—Rs. 418,000 nearly

Talehar—Raja Kishore Chandra Birbar
Harichandan, Raja of—

Date of birth—9th June 1880

Date of succession—18th December 1891

Area in sq. miles—399

Population—86,482

Revenue—Rs. 8,97,668 gross

Maratha States—(Bombay Presy)

Akalkot—Meherban Shrimant Vijayasingh
Fatehsingh, Raja Bhonsle, Raja of—

Date of birth—13th Dec. '15

Date of succession—4th April '23

Area in sq. miles—498

Population—92,605

Revenue—Rs. 7,58,000 nearly

Aundh—Meherban Bhavanrao alias Bala
Sahib, Pant Pratinidhi of—

Date of birth—24th Oct. 1868

Date of succession—4th November '09

Area in sq. miles—501

Population—88,762

Revenue—Rs. 3,38,278-12-1

Phaltan—Major Raja Shrimant Malojirao
Mudhojirao alias Nana Sahab Naik
Nimbalkar, Raja of—

Date of birth—11th September 1896

Date of succession—17th October '16

Area in sq. miles—397

Population—58,761

Revenue—Rs. 8,56,000

Jath—Lt. Raja Shrimant Viiayasinghrao
Ramrao Daffe, Raja of—

Date of birth—21st July '09

Date of succession—14th August '28

Area in sq. miles—981

Population—91,099

Revenue—Rs. 4,25,000

Jamkhandi—Meherban Shankarrao
Parashramrao alias Appasaheb
Patwardhan, Raja Sahab of—

Date of birth—5th Nov. '06

Date of succession—25th Feb. '24

Area in sq. miles—524

Population—1,14,282

Revenue—Rs. 10,06,715

Kurundwad (Senior)—Meherban Chinta-
manrao Bhalchandraao alias Balasaheb
Patwardhan, Chief of—

Date of birth—13th Feb. '21

Date of succession—10th September '27

Area in sq. miles—182.5

Population—88,760

Revenue—Rs. 3, 76,000 nearly

Kurundwad (Jr.)—Meherban Madhavrao
Ganpatro alias Bhausaheb Patwar-
dhan, chief of—

Date of birth—6th Dec. 1875

Date of succession—29th July, 1899

Area in sq. miles—114

Population—34,288

Revenue—Rs. 2,88,000 nearly

Miraj (Sr)—Narayanrao Gangadharrao
alias Tatyasaheb Patwardhan,
Chief of—

Date of birth—6th September 1898

Date of succession—11th Dec. '39

Area in sq. miles—342

Population—93,938

Revenue—Rs. 4,41,000 nearly

Miraj (Jr)—Meherban Sir Madhavrao
Harihar alias Baba Sahab Patwardhan,
K.C.I.E., Raja of—

Date of birth—4th March 1889

Date of succession—16th Dec. 1899

Area in sq. miles—196½

Population—40,686

Revenue—Rs. 3,68,515 nearly

Ramdurg—Meherban Ramrao Venkatrao
alias Rao Sahab Bhawe, Chief of—

Date of birth—16th Sept. 1896

Date of succession—30th April '07

Area in sq. miles—169

Population—33,997

Revenue—Rs. 2,69,000 nearly

Savanur—Captain Meherban Abdul
Majid Khan, Diler Jang Bahadur,
Nawab of—

Date of birth—7th Oct. 1890

Date of succession—30th January 1893

Area in sq. miles—70

Population—16,830

Revenue—Rs. 1,69,000 nearly

Mahi-Kantha States

Ghodasar—Thakor Shri Fatehsinghji
Ratansinji Dabhi, Thakor Sahab of—

Date of birth—7th. Aug. '09

Date of succession—31st May '30

Area in sq. miles—16

Population—6,708

Revenue—Rs. 51,000

Ilol—Thakor Shivsinghji, Thakor of—

Date of birth—31st Dec. '10

Date of succession—18th Oct. '27

Area in sq. miles—19

Population—3,349

Revenue—Rs. 41,000 nearly

Katosan—Thakor Takhtasinhji Karan-
sinhji, Thakor of—

Date of birth—9th Dec. 1870

Date of succession—January '01

Area in sq. miles—10

Population—4,818

Revenue—Rs. 51,000 nearly
Khadal—Sardar Shri Fatehsinhji Raj-sinhji, Thakor Shri of—
 Date of birth—1899
 Date of succession—7th February '12
 Area in sq. miles—8
 Population—2,825
 Revenue—Rs. 35,000 nearly
Malpur—Raolji Shri Gambhirsinhji Himatsinhji—
 Date of birth—27th Oct. '14
 Date of succession—23rd June '23
 Area in sq. miles—97
 Population—16,582
 Revenue—Rs. 1,10,000 approx.
Pethapur—Thakor Fatehsinhji Gambhirsinhji, Thakor of—
 Date of birth—3rd Oct. 1895
 Date of succession—1896
 Area in sq. miles—11
 Population—3,938
 Revenue—Rs. 34,000 (nearly)
Varsoda—Thakor Joravarsinhji of—
 Date of birth—17th April '14
 Date of succession—18th July '19
 Area in sq. miles—11
 Population—3,424
 Revenue—Rs. 33,000 nearly
Vijayanagar—Rao Shri Hamir-sinhji
 Date of birth—3rd January '04
 Date of succession—27th June '16
 Area in sq. miles—135
 Population—12,000 (approx)
 Revenue—Rs. 1,00,000 nearly

Rewa Kantha States

Bhadarwa—Shrimant Thakur Saheb Shree Natvarsinhji Ranjitsinhji, Thakor of—
 Date of birth—19th November '03
 Date of succession—26th April '35
 Area in sq. miles—27 (excluding several Wanta villages under Baroda State)
 Population—13,520
 Revenue—Rs. 1,14,000 nearly
Jambugodha—Meherban Rana Shri Ranjitsinhji Gambhirsinhji, Thakore Saheb of—Parmar Rajput. He enjoys full Civil and Criminal powers.
 Date of birth—4th January 1892
 Date of succession—27th September '17
 Area in sq. miles—143
 Population—11,385
 Revenue—Rs. 142,000
Kadana—Rana Shri Chatrasalji, Thakor of
 Date of birth—28th January 1879
 Date of succession—12th April 1889
 Area in sq. miles—130
 Population—15,370
 Revenue—Rs. 1,82,000 nearly
Nasvadi—Thakor Ranjitsinhji, Thakor of—
 Date of birth—24th March '05

Date of succession—13th Sept. '27
 Area in sq. miles—1950
 Population—4,197
 Revenue—Rs. 33,000 nearly
Palasani—Thakor Indarsinhji, Thakor of—
 Date of birth—16th Aug. 1885
 Date of succession—30th May '07
 Area in sq. miles—12
 Population—1,766
 Revenue—Rs. 22,000 nearly
Sibora—Thakor Mansinhjee Karansinhjee
 Date of birth—14th November '07
 Date of succession—13th June '28
 Area in sq. miles—19 (approx)
 Population—5300
 Revenue—Rs. 36,000 nearly
Uchad—Thakor Mohomadnia Jitawaba
 Date of birth—15th October 1895
 Date of succession—24th June '15
 Area in sq. miles—8'50
 Population—2,330
 Revenue—Rs. 41,000 nearly
Umetha—Thakor Ramsinhji Raisinhji
 Date of birth—19 August 1894
 Date of succession—1st July '22
 Area in sq. miles—24
 Population—5,355
 Revenue—Rs. 73,000 nearly

Central India States

Alipura—Rao Harpal Singh, Rao of—
 Date of birth—12th Aug. 1882
 Date of succession—26th March '22
 Area in sq. miles—73
 Population—14,580
 Revenue—Rs. 70,000 nearly
Bakhtgarh—Thakur Rai Singh, Thakur of
 Date of birth—3rd October 1889
 Date of succession—30th May '12
 Area in sq. miles—66
 Population—10,414
 Revenue—Rs. 74,000 nearly
Garauli—Diwan Bahadur Chandrabhan Singh, chief of—
 Date of birth—2nd April 1883
 Date of succession—20th Dec. 1883
 Area in sq. miles—31
 Population—4,965
 Revenue—Rs. 36,000 nearly
Jobat—Rana Bhimsing, Rana of—
 Date of birth—10th November '15
 Date of succession—20th May '17
 Date of getting Ruling Powers—14th March '36
 Area in sq. miles—131,20
 Population—20,945
 Revenue—Rs. 81,550/-
Kachhi-Baroda—Maharaj Benimadho Singh
 Date of birth—3rd October '04
 Date of succession—13th June '06
 Area in sq. miles—34,53

Population—5000
Revenue—Rs. 71,000/-

Kathiwar—Rana Thakur Sahib
Onkarsinhji, Rana of—

Date of birth—5th December 1891

Date of succession—8th June, '03

Area in sq. miles—70

Population—6096

Revenue—Rs. 44,880

Kothi—Raja Bahadur Sitaraman Pratap

Bahadur Singh, Raja of—

Date of birth—26th July 1892

Date of succession—8th August '14

Area in sq. miles—169

Population—20,087

Revenue—Rs. 70,000 nearly

Kurwai—Nawab Sarwar Ali Khan of—

Date of birth—1st December '01

Date of succession—2nd October '06

Area in sq. miles—142

Population—19,351

Revenue—Rs. 2,64,000 nearly

Mota Barkhera—Bhumia Nain Singh of—

Date of birth—7th November '07

Date of succession—4th June '12

Area in sq. miles—39

Population 4,782

Revenue—Rs. 53,000 nearly

Multhan—Dharmalankar, Dharm-bhushan,
Dharm-Divaker, Shreeman Maharaj

Bharat Sinhi Sahib, Chief of—

Date of birth—1893

Date of succession—26th August '01

Area in sq. miles—100

Population—11,804

Revenue—Over Rs. 1,00,000

Nimkhera—Bhumia Ganga Singh, Bhumia

Date of birth—'11

Date of succession—27th March '22

Area in sq. miles—90

Population—5,358

Revenue—Rs. 62,000 nearly

Paldeo—Chaubei Shiva Prasad, Jagirdar of

Date of birth—1st March '08

Date of succession—3rd Oct. '23

Area in sq. miles—53.14

Population—9,038

Revenue—Rs. 50,000 nearly

Piploda—Rawat Mangal Singh, Rawat of

Date of birth—7th September 1893

Date of succession—5th Nov. '19

Area in square miles—35

Population—9,766

Revenue—Rs. 1,14,000

Sarila—Raja Mahipal Singh, Raja of—

Date of succession—11th Sep. 1898

Area in square miles—35.28

Population—6,081

Revenue—Rs. 1,00,000 nearly

Sarwan—Thakur Mahendra Singh

Date of birth—6th November '09

Date of succession—23rd April '21

Area in sq. miles—71

Population—7,199

Revenue—Rs. 60,000 nearly

Sohawal—Raja Bhagwat Raj Bahadur

Singh, C.I.E., Raja of—

Date of birth—7th August 1878

Date of succession—23rd Nov. 1899

Area in sq. miles—213

Population—38,078

Revenue—Rs. 1,04,000 nearly

Tori Fatehpur—Dewan Raghuraj Singh,

Jagirdar of—

Date of birth—28.1.1895

Date of succession—7.4. '41

Area in sq. miles—36

Population—6,269

Revenue—Rs. 31,000 nearly

Central Provinces States

Bastar—Maharaja Pravir Chandra Deo

Date of birth—25th June '29

Date of succession—28th Feb. '36

Area in sq. miles—13,725

Population—6,34,915

Revenue—Rs. 13,20,699

Chhukhadan—Mahant Bhudhar Kishore

Das of—

Date of birth—April 1891

Date of succession—30th Sept. '03

Area in sq. miles—154

Population—26,141

Revenue—Rs. 1,22,000

Jashpur—Raja Bijay Bhushan Singh Deo

Date of birth—11th Jan. '26

Date of succession—8th Feb. '26

Area in sq. miles—1,923

Population—2,23,632

Revenue—Rs. 3,62,342

Kanker—Maharajadhiraj Bhanupratap

Deo, Chief of—

Date of birth—17th September '22

Date of succession—8th Jan. '25

Area in sq. miles—1,429

Population—122,928

Revenue—Rs. 3,38,000

Kawardba—Thakur Dharmraj Singh

Chief of—

Date of birth—18th August '10

Date of succession—4th Feb. '20

Area in sq. miles—805

Population—72,820

Revenue—Rs. 2,93,175 nearly

Khairagarh—Raja Birendra Bahadur

Singh, Raja of—

Date of birth—9th November '14

Date of succession—22nd October '18

Area in sq. miles—931

Population—157,400

Revenue—Rs. 5,80,000 nearly

Korea—Raja Ramanuj Pratap Singh Deo.

Raja of—

Date of birth—8th December '31
 Date of succession—November '09
 Area in sq. miles—1,647
 Population—90,600
 Revenue—Rs. 7,00,199

Makrai—Raja Drigpal Shah Hathiya Rai of
 Date of birth—24th September '04
 Date of succession—30th October '18
 Area in sq. miles—165
 Population—12,803
 Revenue—Rs. 2,01,000 nearly

Nandgaon—Mahant Sarveshwar Das, of—
 Date of birth—30th March '06
 Date of succession—24th June '13
 Area in sq. miles—571
 Population—1,47,919
 Revenue—Rs. 7,91,000

Raigarh—Raja Chakradhar Singh, Raja of
 Date of birth—19th August '05
 Date of succession—23rd August '24
 Area in sq. miles—1486
 Population—2,41,834
 Revenue—Rs. 6,46,000 nearly

Sakti—Raja Liladhar Singh, Raja of—
 Date of birth—3rd Feb. 1892
 Date of succession—4th July '14
 Area in sq. miles—188
 Population—41,595
 Revenue—Rs. 1,20,000 nearly

Sarangarh—Raja Bahadur Jawahir Singh,
 Date of birth—3rd Dec. 1888
 Date of succession—5th Aug. 1890
 Area in sq. miles—540
 Population—1,17,781
 Revenue—Rs. 3,14,000 nearly

Surguja—Maharaja Ramanuj Saran Singh,
 Deo C.B.E., Maharaja of—
 Date of birth—4th Nov. 1895
 Date of succession—31st Dec. '17
 Area in sq. miles—6,055
 Population—5,51,307
 Revenue—Rs. 7,58,500 nearly

Udaipur—Raja Chandra Chur Prasad
 Singh Deo, Raja of—
 Date of birth—5th. June '23
 Date of succession—8th Dec. '27
 Area in sq. miles—1,052
 Population—71,124
 Revenue—Rs. 3,22,000

Madras States

Sandur—Raja Srimant Yeshwantha Rao
 Anna Saheb, Rao Sahib, Hindu Rao
 Ghorapade, Mamlukamadar Senapati
 Raja of—
 Date of birth—15th November '08
 Date of succession—5th May '28
 Area in sq. miles—167
 Population—11,684
 Revenue—Rs. 2,03,000 nearly

Punjab States

Dujana—Jalal-ud-Daula Nawab Mohammad

Iqtidar Ali Khan Bahadur, Mustaqil-i-Jan, Nawab of—

Date of birth—20th Nov. '12
 Date of succession—21st July '25
 Area in sq. miles—100
 Population—25,833
 Revenue—Rs. 1,65,000 nearly

Kalsia—Raja Ravi Sher Singh Sahib
 Bahadur, Raja Sahib of—
 Date of birth—30th October '02
 Date of succession—25th July '08
 Date of investiture with } 6th April '22.
 full ruling powers: }

Area in sq. miles—192
 Population—69,844
 Revenue—Nearly Rs. 3,50,000

Pataudi—Nawab Muhammad Iftikar Ali
 Khan Bahadur, Nawab of—
 Date of birth—7th March '10
 Date of succession—30th Nov. '17
 Area in sq. miles—53
 Population—18,097
 Revenue—Rs. 1,40,000 nearly

Simla Hill States

Baghal—Raja Surendra Singh, Raja of—
 Date of birth—14th March '09
 Date of succession—13th Oct. '22
 Area in sq. miles—124
 Population—25,099
 Revenue—Rs. 1,00,000 nearly

Baghat—Raja Durga Singh, Raja of—
 Date of birth—15th Sept. '01
 Date of succession—30th Dec. '1941
 Area in sq. miles—34
 Population—9,595
 Revenue—Rs. 1,10,000 nearly

Bhajji—Rana Birpal, Rana of—
 Date of birth—19th April '06
 Date of succession—9th May '13
 Area in sq. miles—96
 Population—14,263
 Revenue—Rs. 99,000 nearly

Jabbal—Rana Sir Bhagat Chandra Bahadur
 K.C.S.I., Ruler of—
 Date of birth—12th Oct. 1888
 Date of succession—29th April '10
 Area in sq. miles—283
 Population—23,500
 Revenue—Rs. 8,50,000 nearly

Keonthal—Raja Hemendar Sen, Raja of—
 Date of birth—21st January '05
 Date of succession—2nd Feb. '16
 Area in sq. miles—116
 Population—25,599
 Revenue—Rs. 1,30,000 nearly

Kumharsain—Rana Vidyadhar Singh,
 Date of birth—1895
 Date of succession—24th August '14
 Area in sq. miles—97
 Population—13,227
 Revenue—Rs. 75,000 nearly

Nalagarh—Raja Jogindra Singh, Raja of—

Date of birth—1870

Date of succession—18th Sept. '11

Area in sq. miles—256

Population—52,737

Revenue—Rs. 2,71,000 nearly

Tiroch—Thakur Surat Singh, of—

Date of birth—4th July 1887

Date of succession—14th July '02

Area in sq. miles—75

Population—4,219

Revenue—Rs. 1,30,000 nearly

Western India States

Barana—Malek Shri Kamalkhan Jivankhan,

Chief of—

Date of birth—6th December '07

Date of succession—2nd Feb. '20

Area in sq. miles—183.12

Population—14,017

Revenue—Rs. 1,82,424 average

Bantwa-Manavadar—Babi Ghulam

Moyuddinkhanji Fatehdinkhanji,

Chief of—

Date of birth—22nd December '11

Date of succession—October '18

Area in sq. miles—221.8

Population—14,984

Revenue—Rs. 8,46,000 nearly

Chuda—Thakore Shri Bahadursinghji,

Jaravarsinhji, Thakur of—

Date of birth—23rd April '09

Date of succession—20th January '21

Area in sq. miles—782

Population—11,338

Revenue—Rs. 2,11,000 nearly

Jasdan—Darbar Shree Ala Khachar,

Chief of—

Date of birth—4th November '05

Date of succession—11th June '19

Area in sq. miles—296

Population—36,632

Revenue—Rs. 6,00,000 nearly

Kotda-Sanganl—Thakore Shri Pradyumna-Sinhji

Date of birth—5th December '20

Date of succession—23-2-30

Date of Installation—10-12-40

Area in sq. miles—90

Population—12,166

Revenue—Rs. 1,50,000 nearly

Lakhtar—Thakore Saheb Shri Balavir-sinhji, Karansinhji, Thakore Saheb of—

Date of birth—11th January 1881

Date of succession—8th August '24

Area in sq. miles—247,438

Population—21,123

Revenue—Rs. 4,49,000

Lathi—Thakore Saheb Shri Pralhadshinhji, Thakore of—

Date of birth—31st March '12

Date of succession—14th October '18

Area in sq. miles—41.8

Population—8,35

Revenue—Rs. 1,86,000

Malla—Thakor Shri Raisinhji Modji, of—

Date of birth—14th February 1898

Date of succession—20th Oct. '07

Area in sq. miles—103

Population—12,660

Revenue—Rs. 3,02,000

Mull—Thakor Shri Harichandrasinhji, of—

Date of birth—10th July 1899

Date of succession—3rd December '05

Area in sq. miles—133.2

Population—16,390

Revenue—Rs. 1,07,000 nearly

Patdi—Desai Shri Raghuvirsinhji, of—

Date of birth—8th Jan. '26

Date of succession—25th Oct. '28

Area in sq. miles—39.4

Population—2,508

Revenue—Rs. 1,14,000

Sayla—Thakor Saheb Shri Madarsinhji,

Vakhatsinhji, Thakor Saheb of—

Date of birth—28th May 1868

Date of succession—25th Jan. '24

Area in sq. miles—222.1

Population—13,351

Revenue—Rs. 2,54,000

Thana Devli—Darbar Shri Vala Amra

Laxman, Chief of—

Date of birth—28th Nov. 1895

Date of succession—12th Oct. '22

Area in sq. miles—94.21

Population—11,349

Revenue—Rs. 3,00,000 nearly

Tharad—Waghela Bhumsinhji Dolatsinhji Thakor of—

Date of birth—28th Jan. '00

Date of succession—19th Feb. '21

Area in sq. miles—1,260½

Population—52,839

Revenue—Rs. 99,000 nearly

Vadla—Darbar Shree Suragwala Saheb Chief of—

Date of birth—15th March '05

Date of succession—7th Sept. '30

Area in sq. miles—90

Population—13,749

Revenue—Rs. about 2 lacs

Zainabad—Malek Shri Aziz Mahomed Khanji Zainkhanji, Talukdar of—

Date of birth—21st June '17

Date of succession—26th January '28

Area in sq. miles—30

Population—3,456

Revenue—Rs. 1,200,000 nearly

Chronicle of Events

January 1943

Mr. V. D. Savarkar presided over the All-India Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha, which met at Cawnpore. The Committee accepted a resolution authorising the President to select office-bearers for the next year. Among others—Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherji (Working President), Bhai Paramanand and Mr. N. C. Chatterjee (Vice-Presidents), Dr. B. S. Moonje and Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri (General Secretaries) were selected office-bearers.

Allama Mashriq exhorted Khaksars in New Delhi to work for Hindu Moslem Unity and said that no humanity would win freedom by fighting other Communities.

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras sent a letter to the Editors of English and Vernacular papers in Madras which did not publish the New year Honours List, withdrawing the facilities to receive copies of Press Communiques, Press Notes and other materials officially released to Press.

Mr. N. R. Sarkar, Commerce Member, Government of India, stated in Calcutta :—"If the present position in respect of foodgrains continued, exports of foodgrains from the country would be completely stopped after March, 1943."

The ban on Khaksars in Bengal was withdrawn.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, stated in London : "Whatever transformations or modifications there might be in the future constitution of India, the Ruling Princes in India and their able advisers were bound to play a very large part".

The Reserve Bank of India issued a Press communique stating that the Bank would shortly issue a Bank Note of the denomination of Rs. 2 in accordance with the direction of the Central Government.

The Government of Madras issued orders, re: Press privileges, cancelling their earlier direction to the Heads of Departments and other officers not to give advertisements to them.

The Central Government prohibited the bringing into British India of any document containing any words, signs, or visible representations of the nature described in Sub. Sec. (1) of Sec. 4 of the Indian Press Act.

M. Atay, Leader of the Turkish Press delegation, at a Press Conference at Rawalpindi, said that the Treaty Alliance between Turkey and Great Britain had stabilised Anglo-Turkish relations.

Mr. L. S. Amery, in reply to Mr. Sorenson, in the House of Commons re: raising the ban on contact between non-Congress representatives and Congress leaders, said that as the decision was taken by Government of India, he was not prepared to interfere.

At the All-India Sikh Youth Conference, in Lahore, Sadar Bahadur Ujjal Singh presided. He exhorted the Sikh youths to join the Army in as large numbers as possible.

1st. The Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, Minister for Agriculture and Industries, in a New year Message to the people of Bengal gave an assurance that there was no cause for anxiety regarding the rice situation in the province as a whole.

The All-India Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha met at Cawnpore. Mr. V. D. Savarkar presided.—The Committee at the outset accepted a resolution authorising the President to select office-bearers for the next year. The Committee approved of the names proposed by Mr. Savarkar in consultation with Mahasabha leaders.—The following were selected office bearers for the ensuing year : Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji (Working President) : Dr. P. V. Naidu, Mr. B. G. Khaparde, Mr. N. C. Chatterji, Rai Bahadur Harish Chandra, Bhai Paramananda and Sir Gokul Chand Narang (Vice-Presidents) : Dr. B. S. Moonje and Mr. Ashutosh Lahiry (General Secretaries) ; and Mr. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar and Mr. G. V. Ketkar, (Secretaries).

- 2nd. Mr. D. N. Wadia, in his presidential address at the 30th Session of the Indian Science Congress in Calcutta, made a suggestion for preventing world wars in the future. The method Mr. Wadia advocated was that the supply and the free movement of a few ferro-alloys and a few strategic key minerals for non-industrial uses should be controlled by some central organization.

Allama Mashriq who arrived in New Delhi from Madras exhorted Khaksars to work for Hindu-Moslem Unity and said no community would win freedom for itself or for the country by fighting other communities.

Ex-Premier Allah Bux as President of the Azad Muslim Board, in a statement on the decisions of the Hindu Mahasabha at Cawnpore, said : "I appeal to Mr. Jinnah at this juncture to take the initiative in his hands and bring about a settlement with the Congress. We, Azad Muslims, welcome ever more for a National Government based on a Congress-League settlement."

- 3rd. Mr. N. R. Sarker, Commerce Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, met representatives of a number of Chambers of Commerce and Commercial Associations at a Conference at the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, when the food supply problem was discussed. The Commerce Member admitted that the control schemes initiated by the Government had not yielded the results they had expected. It should be appreciated that in the absence of any scheme for control, the situation would have been even worse.

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras sent to the editors of English and Vernacular papers in Madras which did not publish the New Year Honours List, the following letter :—"I am directed to state that as you have not published the New Year Honours List, the Government have decided to withdraw the facilities given to your reporters to go over to the secretariat to receive copies of Press Communiques, Press Notes and other materials officially released to the Press. This decision will take effect immediately."

- 4th. Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, Commerce Member, Government of India, in his presidential address at the 6th Session of the Indian Statistical Conference in Calcutta, stressed the important role played by Statistics in modern civilized life.

The Indian Science Congress concluded its deliberations in Calcutta—Subjects relating to different branches of Science including Anthropology and Archaeology, Physics, Medical and Veterinary, Botany and Physiology were discussed.

- 5th. Mr. N. R. Sarker, Commerce Member, Government of India, at a meeting he had with the Committee of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, in Calcutta, stated : "If the present position in respect of foodgrains continued, exports of foodgrains from the country would be completely stopped after March, 1943."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, formula for a political settlement was suggested in a resolution admitted for discussion.

- 6th. A notification in the Calcutta Gazette stated that the ban on Khaksars in Bengal had been withdrawn.

The Government of the N. W. F. Province withdrew the ban on Khaksars.

Dr. P. V. Naidu, Vice-President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, expressed the view in Madras, that the British government must immediately concede the demand for the constitution of a National government for India, that they must not encourage any proposal emanating from any party, whatever its importance might be, jeopardising the integrity of the country.

The Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in a communication to the Government of India expressed anxiety over "the serious shortage of cloth and the consequent abnormal rise in its price which is causing great hardships to the masses in the country." The Committee requested them to put an embargo on export of cloth till such time as enough stocks were available in the country to meet the local requirements.

7th. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haque, leader of the Progressive Coalition Party in the Bengal Legislature, in a Press statement, suggested certain alternative schemes to those recommended by the Bengal Land Revenue Commission.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, speaking at a luncheon of the Overseas League, given in honour of the Jam Sahib of Nawangar, in London, said: "Whatever modifications or transformations there might be in the future constitution of India, the Ruling Princes in India and their able advisers were bound to play a very large part."

8th. The Bengal Association of Master Printers and Allied Industries in a resolution adopted by them, made the suggestion that instead of commandeering 90 per cent of the production of paper-mills, the government of India should release $\frac{1}{3}$ rd. of such production for the use of the public.

9th. The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, addressing a gathering in Madras, declared that the great ideal that had inspired him from the time of his entry into politics and which he had scrupulously tried to practise during the course of his public life was to pursue the path of forbearance (shanti) and not to give place to temper politics.

Sir Henry Twynam, Governor of C. P., opening the Lakshminarayan Institute of Technology at Nagpore, paid a tribute to the munificence of the late Rai Bahadur Lakshminarayan, who donated Rs. 35 lakhs for the Institute.

Dr. T. S. Rajan, ex-Minister, commenting on the Madras Government's action in withdrawing Press privileges from newspapers, observed: "It is a silly expression of impotent anger against the popular press by the Madras Government."

The Government of Orissa issued a Press Note addressing all Oriyas, who left their employment in Calcutta following the air raids on the City, to return there as soon as possible in their own interests.

10th. The General Council of the Anjuman himayat-i Islam, Lahore, at a meeting unanimously resolved to commemorate the memory of the late Sir Sikander Hyat Khan by (a) building a "Sikander Hall" in the Islamic College for girls and (b) by founding Sir Sikandar Military Academy in the Islamic College for boys.

11th. Sir Jogendra Singh, Member for Education, Health and Lands, at a Press Conference in New Delhi, reviewing the results of the "grow more food" campaign, gave figures to indicate that the increase of 7.6 million acres under rice and millets, which was set as the goal for the previous year, had been achieved.

Sir Azizul Haque, the High Commissioner for India in a broadcast from London, made an appeal to the people of Britain to help the victims of the Cyclone, which occurred in Midnapore in S. W. Bengal.

12th. Mr. Jayathram, Chief Secretary to the C. P. Government at a special Press Conference at Nagpur, announced the news of a settlement between Professor Bhansali and the C. P. Government, leading to the former undertaking to break his fast.

Mr. Jayathram said that the order issued under the Defence of India Rules banning publication of all news about Professor Bhansali on December, 1942, had been withdrawn.

Mr. N. K. Sarker, Commerce Member, Government of India, had discussions in New Delhi, with the Assam Governor, Sir Andrew Clow, in regard to the food position in Assam vis-a-vis the disposal of the province's surplus of 40,000 tons of rice.

Her Highness the Dowager Maharani Gajaraja Sahiba of Gwalior passed away at Gwalior at the age of 49.

13th. The Directorate of Civil Supplies, Government of Bengal, drew up a comprehensive scheme for the distribution of sugar in Calcutta and the districts of Bengal.

The Government of Orissa issued a Press Note on the damage caused by the Cyclone in Puri district on November 15, 1942.

14th. Sir Maurice Hallett, the Governor of the United Provinces, addressing the opening session of the Central Advisory Board of Education at Lucknow, stressed education's part in post-war reconstruction and the importance of discipline in Schools, Colleges and Universities,

15th. The Reserve Bank of India issued the following Press Communique:—
 "The Reserve Bank of India will shortly issue from its Issue Offices in India a Bank note of the denomination of Rs. 2 in accordance with the direction of the Central Government in terms of the provisions of Sec. 24 of the Reserve Bank of India Act (II of 1934).

The Government of Bengal decided to take a census of the area of land under cultivation of various crops in the province and also their yields in 1943-44, in order to find the exact scope "of the grow more food" campaign in the province.

H. E. Sir Roger Lumley, Governor of Bombay, gave an assurance in Bombay, after his return from New Delhi, that allotments of food were made to Bombay province from other provinces which, provided they were fulfilled, should keep Bombay both in the city as well as in the districts well upto April.

16th. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha nominated the following to be members of the Working Committee: Mr. Gulab Chand Hirachand, Mr. A. S. Bhide, Mr. B. V. Gogte and Mr. Anand Priyaji.

17th. Mr. K. M. Munshi, delivering the inaugural address of the Nagpur Press Club, said: The cry of Pakistan was created, fostered and stimulated by the British Government for its own purposes and it will be utter self-delusion that the Hindu Muslim problem is a local one created by us and that we can solve it. My own view is that we should refuse to be bullied by anybody, whether in this country or outside, into conceding anything which will in any way militate against the unity of the country".

18th. The Government of Bombay served an order, under the Criminal law Amendment Act, on Bachraj and Co. intimating them that the Government intend to forfeit Rs. 70,000 believed to be funds belonging to the All-India Congress Committee deposited with the Hindustan Sugar Mills Ltd., in the Sitapur District, U. P.—Bacharaj and Co. were the managing agents of the mills.

The Hon'ble Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, presiding over the hundred and first anniversary of the late Mr. Mahadev Govinda Ranade at Poona, declared: I honestly think that only Ranade's political philosophy can help us to break the deadlock and march on".

Two resolutions were tabled by Sir Ziauddin Ahmed dealing with Food and Price Control to be discussed in the Budget session of the Central Assembly.

19th. The 1st report issued by the Civil Defence H.Q. Bengal, on information received from combined H.Q. Eastern India, stated: "A small formation of enemy bombers attacked the Calcutta area between 21,00 hrs. and 22,00 hrs. on January 19".

Urgent steps were taken by the Bengal Government to relieve the coal supply position in Calcutta.

At an emergent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Indian Languages Newspapers Association in Bombay, Government's intention to effect a cut in the newsprint supply for 1943 was criticized.—Mr. Amritlal Seth presided.

20th. The Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, Minister for Agriculture and Industries, at a Press Conference in Calcutta, announced the decision of the Government of Bengal to set up an organization of selected importers and distributors throughout Bengal to ensure equitable distribution over the whole province at fair prices of essential commodities imported at known prices.

Following the communication announcing the restoration of Press privileges to newspapers from which they stood withdrawn, the Government of Madras issued orders cancelling their earlier direction to the Heads of Departments and other officers not to give advertisements to them.

21st. Mr. L. S. Amery said in the House of Commons that the question of shipping wheat to India to tide over until the new crop was available, was being urgently considered by the British Government.

The eighth session of the National Defence Council opened at the Viceroy's House, New Delhi.—The Hon'ble the Home Member presented a brief review of the internal situation which was followed by a discussion.

At a Conference between Mr. Somerset Butler, Controller of Foodgrains Purchase, Government of India and some representative businessmen of Calcutta, in the premises of Bengal Chamber of Commerce, questions relating to the Government scheme for maintaining food supply in the country were discussed.

Mr. L. S. Amery, in reply to a question in the House of Commons, re: relief work in Bengal, said:—"For the organization of relief the affected area

has been divided into 54 circles, each circle in charge of a full-time relief officer who places and co-ordinates the work of the Government, voluntary relief workers and relief of organizations. The latter are undertaking the distribution of immediate gratuitous relief with food, clothing and other necessities, while the Government attend to long-term relief, such as loans to rebuild houses, reorganizing business and the purchase of cattle and agricultural implements".

- 22nd. The Government of India, in order to relieve low-paid establishments, decided to liberalise, with effect from the 1st January, 1943, the dearness allowance scheme for Central Government servants other than railway employees.

The Central Government prohibited the bringing into British India of any document containing any words, signs or visible representations of the nature described in Sub Sec. (1) of Sec. 4 of the Indian Press Act.

The immediate closure of schools in the city and suburbs without any chance of revival unless Government came forward with financial help was visualised in a resolution adopted at a Conference of Heads of various school in Calcutta.

- 23rd. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, addressing a Conference convened by the Madras Youth Council, in Madras, to discuss problems connected with National Government and National Defence explained his proposals for a Congress-League settlement.

- 24th. The Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, one of India's representatives on the British War Cabinet, arrived at Karachi.

The National Defence Council met at the Viceroy's House, New Delhi, H. E. the Viceroy presided. The C. in C. reviewed the war situation. The policy of the Government of India in relation to the dearness allowance was explained by Dr. Ambedkar and discussed.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah addressing a meeting of the Muslim Federation in Bombay, declared: "The key to resolving the present deadlock primarily rests with Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders: if they show real and genuine desire it is possible to solve the problem".

Malik Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, the Punjab Premier, was unanimously elected leader of the Punjab Unionist Party at the 1st meeting of the Party at Lahore.

The Government of Orissa advised the rice and paddy cultivators not to dispose of their saleable stocks of rice and paddy to private speculative buyers as those persons generally offered unduly low prices whereas the Central Government would make big purchases at reasonable prices under the Central Purchases Scheme.

- 25th. Mr. N. R. Sarker, Commerce and Food Member, Government of India, speaking at a Press Conference in New Delhi, announced that "in order to provide early relief for the wheat shortage, the Government have arranged for substantial imports of wheat during the coming 3 months".

A meeting of the Sind Cabinet was held at Karachi to consider the Government of India order lifting price control on wheat.

His Excellency Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor of U. P., speaking at an A. R. P. rally at Benares, said: "I do not pretend to be a military expert, but it may well be that Japan, if driven out of the islands of the Pacific Ocean, will concentrate her forces on an attack against India. That attack will fail, but there may be much 'blood, toil, tears and sweat' before it is defeated; we must be prepared to meet it".

- th. The contributions of the late Sir Gooroodas Banerjee to Bengali educational and cultural life were recalled at a public meeting in Calcutta. Dr. Shyama Prosad Mukherjee presided.

34 persons including 12 women were arrested at Ohaupati (Bombay) where a crowd had collected to hold a meeting in connexion with the Independence Day.

A Bengal Government Press Note said: "Now that the Government of India has announced the policy of Central purchase of foodgrains and the de-control of the wholesale price of wheat, it is possible for the Bengal Government to announce its corresponding policy".

The under-Secretary of State for India, the Earl of Munster, when asked in the House of Lords about "the famine situation in India", said: "The food situation in India is difficult but it is not a famine situation. The shortage affects only urban and a few rural areas".

M. Atay, Leader of the Turkish Press delegation at a Press Conference at Rawalpindi, declared: "The Treaty Alliance between Turkey and Great Britain has stabilised Anglo-Turkish relations and it will influence not only the position in the Middle East for this war but also the coming problem of peace and the period following the peace agreement".

The Travancore Council held its session in the Council Chamber at Trivandrum. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan-president, was in the chair.

28th. Mr. Amery was asked in the House of Commons by Mr. Sorenson (Labour) to raise the ban on contact between Non-Congress representatives and Congress leaders to enable them to discuss possible political developments.—Mr. Amery replied: "Decision in this matter was taken by the Government of India and I see no reason to ask them to reconsider it."

Mr. Amery replying to questions regarding food shortage, recalled the Government of India's statement that if hoarded stocks could be got on the market and fairly distributed, there was little danger of the people having to go seriously short.

Sardar Sant Singh, in a resolution admitted for discussion in the Central Assembly, suggested the formation of a Committee of the Central Assembly and the Council of State to examine the system of Control of the necessities of life and report by the middle of March on how to ensure an equitable distribution of those articles.

29th. Twenty members of an alleged revolutionary gang, who according to the Police, were responsible for a number of bomb outrages in Bombay, were arrested.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Ceylon Government representative in India, forwarded to his Government the reply of the Government of India, relating to his Government's request for 20,000 Indian labourers for rubber plantations.

30th. A series of resolutions were passed by the Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, which met at Kishoregunj. By one resolution, the Committee protested against the manner in which "the Government are delaying elections to the seats rendered vacant by the death of Muslim members of the Legislature". It was asserted that this delay was "due to the fear that the Ministry has of being defeated at the elections."

A press Note said, "Consistently with the policy of fair buying and honest selling, the Government of Bengal have allowed a small increase in the maximum prices of sugar in Calcutta."

Various matters relating to the cotton textile industry in Bengal were discussed by Mr. D. N. Chaudhuri, in his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Bengal Millowners' Association in Calcutta.

Professor N. Gangulee, commenting on the statement made by Mr. Amery, Secretary of State, that there was no famine and no widespread prevalence of food shortage in India, said: "British public is still ignorant of the true food situation in India and whatever news from India has come conclusively proves that Mr. Amery was wrong."

A Gazette Extraordinary announced that the Punjab Government cancelled their order of September, 1942, requiring all printers, publishers, and editors of newspapers and periodicals, published in the Punjab, to submit before publication for scrutiny, to the Special Press Adviser, Lahore.

Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh, M. L. A., presiding over the All-India Sikh Youth Conference held in Lahore, made a call to the Sikh Youths to join the military in as large numbers as possible.

31st. At the All-India Sikh Youth Conference which concluded in Lahore, a decision to take a referendum on the question of redistribution of the boundaries of the Punjab with a view to establishing "Azad Punjab" was taken.

February 1943

His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner died in Bombay.

Lala Duni Chand Ambalvi, a Congress member of the Punjab Assembly, placed the Congress view-point regarding the political situation in India before Mr. William Phillips, President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy.

Sir Baron Joyatilaka, the Ceylon Government's representative, observed : "India and Ceylon cannot afford to be bad friends."

Mr. Frank B. Anthony, President-in-chief of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, emphasized at Bangalore, the necessity for the Anglo-Indians to face the economic and political problems in a spirit of stern realism.

Mahatma Gandhi decided to undertake a fast of three weeks' duration from the 10th. of February.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery in answer to Mr. Vernon Bartlet, said that conditions in India were not famine conditions.

Plans for a memorial in Britain to Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore were discussed by the executive committee of the Tagore Society.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed Mr. Baijnath Bajoria's adjournment motion censuring Government on their Paper Control Order.

Mr. N. R. Sarker, Food Member, replying to Mr. K C. Neogy, said in the Central Legislative Assembly : "The Government of India are not committed to the supply of any specific quantity of foodstuffs to Ceylon.

Messages urging the release of Mahatma Gandhi were sent to the Viceroy by several leading Indian merchants and business organizations in the country.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, a new party to be called "The Bengal Parliamentary Labour Party" was to be formed.

In the Bengal Assembly, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, fore-shadowed enhanced taxation in his Budget estimates for the year 1943-44.

A Press Communique from New Delhi stated : "The Hon. Sir H. P. Mody, K.B.E., the Hon. Mr. N. R. Sarker and the Hon. Mr. M. S. Aney having tendered their resignations of the office of members of the Governor-general's Executive Council, H. E. the Governor general has accepted their resignations."

Sir James Taylor, K. C. I. E., Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, died in Bombay.

A joint statement issued by Mr. M. S. Aney, Mr. N. R. Sarker and Sir H. P. Mody observed, inter alia : "Certain differences arose on what we regarded as a fundamental issue (the issue of the action to be taken on Mahatma Gandhi's fast), and we felt we could no longer retain our offices."

The Bengal Legislative Council passed a resolution requesting the Bengal Government to move the Government of India for the immediate and unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha suggested that a national appeal to Mahatma Gandhi himself be made to break his fast.

The Private Secretary to the Viceroy sent a reply to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who communicated the Leaders' Conference resolution urging Mahatma Gandhi's unconditional release to Lord Linlithgow, which stated inter alia : "The attitude of the government of India in the matter of Mr. Gandhi's fast is set out clearly and in detail in the communique which they issued on Feb. 10."

At a meeting of the Working Committee of the All Parties Sikh Conference in Lahore, under the presidentship of Sardar Baldeo

Singh, it was decided to send a telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy urging the immediate unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi in the interest of peace and future relations of Great Britain and India.

An 86 page booklet entitled : "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43," related the troubles which followed "the Sanctioning of a mass movement by the A. I. C. C. on Aug. 8, 1942."

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal raised a point of constitutional importance when he sought a ruling from the chair, as to whether the House had a right to know what advice a Minister had tendered to the governor in relation to a particular matter.

1st. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in an address to the students of the Ismail College, Bombay, emphasizing the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan vis-a-vis the political deadlock in the country, declared that it was a matter of commonsense that if the two principal parties made combined efforts then the British government would yield.

Mr. Rajagopalachari, speaking at the Ravenshaw College Commemoration Day celebrations at Cuttack, said that whenever the question of Pakistan was raised, there was opposition to it on the ground that it would break the unity of India. He wanted people not to get confused about the word unity.

The annual conference of the Behar Provincial Muslim League, held at Patna, passed resolutions drawing the attention of the Government to the shortage of small coins and demanding the exemption of Muslims from collective responsibility in respect of damage caused during the disturbances in the Province.

The following were elected office-bearers of the Central Administration of the European Associations for 1943—President—Mr. C. P. Landson, M. L. A. (Central) ; Vice-Presidents, Mr. M. A. F. Hirtral, M. L. A. (Calcutta), and Mr. W. J. Withams (South India) ; Hon. Secretary, Mr. R. S. Aathus (Calcutta).

2nd. His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner passed away after a short illness at his residence at Bikaner House in Bombay.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India and Burma, in a written answer to a parliamentary question outlined plans for the re-establishment of normal life in Burma after the eviction of the Japanese.

An India Command Joint War communique stated from New Delhi : "On the Assam Front our forward patrols are now operating in the Town area in the Upper Chindwin District."

Mr. C. P. Landson, (chairman) addressing the ordinary annual meeting of the Calcutta branch of the European Association, held in Calcutta, referred to the Indian political problem and said that the Association felt that constitutional changes should be held in abeyance during the period of the war.

Among non-official resolutions ballotted for discussion in the Central Assembly on Feb. 18, were two, in one of which Pandit Nilkantha Das urged immediate steps to implement the Federal part of the government of India Act and in the other, Mr. K. C. Neogy recommended the suspension of the Central Legislature.

Dr. B. S. Moonje, in a press interview in New Delhi, suggested an "unofficial army" of 1,100,000 Indians—a lakh from each province to be trained by the Government of India, particularly in guerilla warfare, to stand as a second line of defence behind the fighting forces. This unofficial army, he added, would be used to maintain order in the country in times of emergency.

M. Sadak of the Turkish Press Mission, speaking at a luncheon in Calcutta, said : "In the course of our sojourn in the country, it has been possible for us to go and come in contact with the people and appreciate the entire civilization of India, old as well as new."

Mr. William Phillips, President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy, arrived at Lahore on a week's visit to the Punjab.

3rd. M. Atay, leader of the Turkish Press delegation, replying to an address of welcome by the Mayor of Calcutta, paid a handsome tribute to India's war effort.

Dr. Syed Abdul Latif, in a statement to the Press at Hyderabad, made an appeal to the Muslim League leaders to come to an agreement with the Congress and the British Government to solve the impasse in India.

Mr. S. Satyamurti, M. L. A., (Central) was ordered to be released by the government of Madras on medical grounds.

- 4th. The Congress view-print regarding the political situation in India was placed before Mr. William Phillips, President Roosevelt's Personal Envoy, by Lala Duni Chand Ambalvi, a Congress member of the Punjab Assembly.

Mr. N. R. Sarker, Commerce Member, Government of India, when he met the Committee of the Association of Indian Industries in Bombay, declared: Export of foodgrains from India has been considerably curtailed during recent months and imports came to less than three days' rice consumption of India.

- 5th. Sir Baron Joytilaka, the Ceylon Government's representative in Delhi, observed: "India and Ceylon cannot afford to be on bad terms."

Of the 11 adjournment motions tabled for the opening day of the Central Legislative Assembly, 4 sought to raise a debate on the food position. They were tabled by Sardar Sant Singh, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. G. V. Deshmukh and Mr. B. Banerjee.

Sir Teunant Sloan, Adviser to the Governor of the United Provinces, at a Press Conference at Lucknow, said that a considerable number of persons detained under Rules 26 and 120 had already been released and it was the policy of Government to release such persons as soon as their further detention was considered to be unwarranted.

- 6th. The Executive Committee of the Sind Journalist Association requested the Government to withdraw the order served on the editor of the *Sind Observer* "directing him to submit editorial comments for pre-censorship for a month."

The Nationalist Party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly decided to send a representative for inclusion in the Bengal Cabinet to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji.

Mr. Frank B. Anthony, President-in-chief of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, addressing a public meeting at Bangalore, emphasised the necessity for the Anglo-Indian community to face the economic and political problems, that would confront them in an India which was soon going to be free, in a spirit of stern realism, and to formulate their future policy accordingly.

- 7th. Mr. M. N. Roy, at a meeting in Calcutta, on the occasion of the observance of "Peoples Freedom Day", explained "the fundamental principles of a genuinely democratic constitution guaranteeing to the people of India the freedom they need."

Dr. K. Lakshmanswamy Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University, in his address on the occasion of the annual founder's day of Annamalai University, refuted the criticism that Indian Universities had failed to fulfil their purpose and the higher education as imparted in India had not turned a success.

- 8th. Sir John Herbert, Governor of Bengal, visualized the part that the Rotarians the world over would play in achieving "a world ideal of brotherhood of man, in sharp contrast to the selfish objectives of Axis nations."

Mr. N. R. Sarker, Member for Food and Commerce addressing the 2nd. meeting of the Food Advisory Council, in New Delhi, said that the statistical position of food crops of the year, though not quite satisfactory, was not such as to justify any undue alarm or panic.

Proposals for the renewals of grants during the year 1943-44 for the development of the handloom, Sericulture in small scale and cottage woolen industries were approved by the Standing Finance Committee at its meeting held in New Delhi. Sir Jeremy Raisman, the Finance Member, presided. The grants agreed to amounted to Rs. 5 lakhs in the case of the 1st. and to Rs. 1 lakh each in the case of the 2nd. and 3rd.

- 9th. Mr. M. A. Karani gave notice of an adjournment motion in the Central Assembly to discuss the Government of India's "failure to take the Legislature into confidence in respect of very important lands of the country for which the Governor-general is compelled to issue ordinances."

Dr. P. Subbarayan, former Madras Minister, in a Press statement made an appeal to Mr. Jinnah to take steps to end the political deadlock in the country.

- 10th. Mahatma Gandhi decided to undertake a fast of three weeks' duration from the 10th of January.—A Government of India Press Communique issued in this connection said that it was to be a fast according to capacity and during it, Mahatma Gandhi proposed to add juices of citrus fruit to water to make the

water drinkable, as his wish was not to fast to death but to survive the ordeal.

The Central Assembly began its budget session.

The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League nominated Mr. M. A. Jinnah for the presidency of the next session of the All India Muslim League.

Pandit L. K. Maitra (Nationalist Party) gave notice of two adjournment motions in the Central Assembly to discuss Mahatma Gandhi's fast and the situations created therefor.

- 11th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery told the House of Commons: "Mr. Gandhi was in his normal state of health when he decided yesterday to undertake "fast."

The Central Assembly passed by 32 votes to 28, Mr. Baijnath Bajoria's adjournment motion censuring Government on their Paper Control order. The Nationalist Party, the Muslim League and the Europeans voted for the motion.

The Secretary of State for India reported in the House of Commons to a question by Mr. Vernon Bartlett (Independent) suggesting that instead of shipping wheat to India to relieve famine conditions there, he should initiate discussions with the Government of the Union of South Africa for the purchase of maize.—Mr. Amery said that conditions in India were not famine conditions. The immediate request of the Government of India was for wheat and he had no reason to think that maize would be an acceptable substitute.

In the Central Assembly, Mr. N. R. Sarker, Food Member, replying to Mr. K. C. Neogy, said: "The Government of India are not committed to supply of any specific quantity of foodstuffs to Ceylon. They have, however, undertaken to assist Ceylon in respect of her primary grain requirements as far as may be possible having regard to India's corn and food position from time to time."

- 12th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. C. M. Trivedi read out an answer to a question on the situation in the E. and S. borders of India.

The Central Assembly resumed discussion on Mr. Neogy's resolution urging an inquiry by a committee of members of the house into allegations of excesses committed by the police and the military in dealing with the disturbances in the country.

The annexures containing Mahatma Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy on August 14, 1943, the Viceroy's reply thereto and Mahatma Gandhi's letter to the Government of India were released for publication together with the Gandhi-Viceroy Correspondence.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, members belonging to different parties combined in paying tributes to the life and work of Sir Thomas Lamb at the opening of the Budget Session of the Council.

- 13th. Messages urging the release of Mahatma Gandhi were sent to the Viceroy by several leading Indian merchants and business organizations in the country.

The Working Committee of the All-India Nationalist League, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta presiding, passed a resolution expressing concern at the correspondence between the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi which culminated in the fast. The resolution expressed the fear that, in view of his age and the duration of the fast, danger of serious results to his health and life could not be minimised, and it should be the duty of every one to explore every method by which his life could be saved.

Mr. Sayed Abdul Aziz, in the course of his convocation speech at Aligarh University said: "A little reflection will show that the relationship of Hindus and Muslims in India is like that of two brothers, who living under one roof, find themselves at variance in regard to different matters and on the verge of hostility, but, who once they have independent establishments of their own, find their relationship more cordial as a result of which they unite together in the common and of affection for their parents and other members of the family".

A Salute of 125 guns proclaimed the accession of H. H. Sir Sadul Singhji Bahadur to the "Gadi" of Bikanir.

- 14th. The Bombay Government issued the following bulletin on Mahatma Gandhi's condition:—"Mr. Gandhi continues to be troubled with nausea and broken sleep and his condition is not so satisfactory as yesterday".

Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor of the U. P. addressing the Council of the U. P. Merchants' Chamber at Cawnpore, said: "We have a vast task before

us, first to win this war, then face the economic, social and political problems which will at once arise. Do not let us indulge in mean destructive criticisms. Let us unite and co-operate ; if we do so, we shall shorten the war, and what is even more important, will get a new order in the peace".

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, a new party was formed, which was to be called, "The Bengal Parliamentary Labour Party", with two of eight Labour Members, namely, Mr. Aftab Ali and Mr. J. M. Gupta.—The programme of the party would be drawn up in consultation with the various trade unions at a conference.

The Governor of Bihar, by a proclamation, decided to suspend those provisions of the Government of India Act which required $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the members of the Legislative Council to retire after 3 years.

The Indian Air Training Corps Scheme for the Universities of India, was inaugurated at Aligarh University by Air Vice-Marshal A. C. Collier, representing Air A. C.

- 15th. Sir Edward Benthall, Transport Member, in his Budget Statement in the Central Assembly, reviewing a year of "unparalleled activity and prosperity" for Indian state-owned railways, continued that "prosperity is illusory. But although critics will give railways little credit for it, I would remind the House that it has been earned not as in other industries by a heavy increase in the price of what we offer, transport, but mainly by making the best of available equipment".

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, expressed his inability to join the proposed Conference at Delhi of prominent leaders to discuss the situation arising out of Mahatma Gandhi's fast.

A resolution by the Central Committee of Communist Party of India, said : "Mahatma Gandhi's statement have swept off every obstacle, every prejudice, that stands in the way of our great patriotic parties uniting among themselves and with the peoples of the United Nations".

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Pandit L. K. Maitra moving an adjournment motion on Mahatma Gandhi's fast, appealed to members of the House to set aside all political considerations and unite in demanding the "immediate and unconditional" release of a great Indian who he said was revered by all.

In the Council of State, Mr. V. V. Kalikar moved an adjournment motion demanding the "unconditional release of Mr. Gandhi".

- 16th. The Central Legislative Assembly rejected without a division, Sardar Sant Singh's adjournment motion to discuss the restrictions placed on the *Hindusthan Times*, Delhi, with regard to the publication of news relating to Mahatma Gandhi's fast.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq foreshadowed taxation in his Budget estimates for the year 1943-44. The yield of the proposed enhanced taxation was estimated at Rs. 33 lakhs.

In the Council of State non-official resolutions figured on the agenda of the Council.

- 17th. A communique issued by the Bombay Government on Mahatma Gandhi's health said : "Mr. Gandhi had a better day on the whole on Tuesday, but his general condition continues to cause anxiety".

A Press Communique from New Delhi stated : "The Hon. Sir H. P. Mody, M. B. E. the Hon. Mr. N. R. Sarkar and the Hon. Mr. M. S. Aney having tendered their resignations of the offices of Members of the Governor General's Executive Council, H. E. the Governor General has accepted their resignations".

Sir James Taylor, K. C. I. E., Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, died in Bombay.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, replying on behalf of the Home Member, informed Sir Ziauddin Ahmed that 40 Conferences and Committee Meetings were convened by the civil departments of the Government of India from April, 1942, to Feb. 1, 1943.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq presented the Budget. He confined his observations to the salient features of the Budget.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, discussion on India's food, fuel, drugs and cloth situation was continued.

- 18th. The following communique was issued by the Bombay Government about Mahatma Gandhi's health :—"The following is the report on Mr. Gandhi's

condition up to this afternoon :—"Although Mr. Gandhi had a total of 9 hours sleep he is not refreshed nor mentally alert. "There is other evidence of euremia which is progressive. "The heart action is feebler. "Anxiety as to his condition deepens. Sd. Dr. M. D. D. Gilder, Maj. Gen. R. H. Candia, Dr. B. C. Roy, Lt. Col. M. G. Bhandari, Dr. Sushila Nayar & Lt. Col. B. Z. Shah."

A joint statement issued by Mr. M. S. Aney, Mr. N. R. Sarkar and Sir H. P. Mody said :—"Our resignations from the Governor-General's Council have been announced and all that we desire to do is to say by way of explanation that certain differences arose on what we regarded as a fundamental issue (the issue of the action to be taken on Mahatma Gandhi's fast), and we felt we could no longer retain our offices. We wish to place on record our appreciation of the courtesy and consideration the Viceroy had extended to us throughout the period during which we had the privilege of being associated with him in the Government of the country."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Edward Benthall, Transport Member, in reply to Sir Ziauddin Ahmed declared that the physical damage caused to railway assets on the B. and N. W. Railway and E. I. Railway as the result of the political disturbances amounted in round figures to Rs. 16 lakhs and Rs. 14 lakhs respectively.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, a supplementary demand for a grant for the current year amounting to over Rs. 3 crores was presented by Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

Mr. L. S. Amery, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, said : "I am content to leave the question of interviews with Mr. Gandhi to the discretion of the Government of India."

- 19th. The Bombay Government issued a communique re : Mahatma Gandhi's health, which stated inter alia : "There is little change in the general condition except increasing weakness."

About 200 leaders, Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and British from all parts of the country met in New Delhi to give expression, as Mr. C. Rajagopalachari said, "to the feeling in this country that Mahatma Gandhi should be enabled to end his fast."

The drafting Committee of the Conference adopted a resolution urging the release of Mahatma Gandhi and in view of the reports received about his health, the committee resolved to send the draft resolution to the Viceroy for immediate action.

The Bengal Legislative Council passed a resolution requesting the Bengal Government to move the Government of India for the immediate and unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, during the general debate on the Railway Budget, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed suggested that the railways were being run neither as a purely business concern nor as a purely public utility concern but as a mixture of both and as one or the other according as the Government liked.

- 20th. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, suggested, "a national appeal to Mahatma Gandhi himself to break his fast, the only way now, which is likely to prove more effective than any other to save his life."

The Bombay Government issued the following communique about Mahatma Gandhi's condition : "Mr. Gandhi's condition has changed considerably for the worse. His condition is very grave. (Sd). Dr. B. C. Roy, Maj-Gen. R. A. Candy, Dr. M. D. D. Gilder, Dr. S. Nayar, Lt. Col. M. G. Bhandari, Lt. Col. B. Z. Shah."

The Private Secretary to the Viceroy sent the following reply to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who communicated the Leaders' Conference resolution urging Mahatma Gandhi's unconditional release to Lord Linlithgow :—"His Excellency asks me to say that he has received and considered the resolution adopted by the conference under your chairmanship, of which you were good enough to send him a copy today.....The attitude of the Government of India in the matter of Mr. Gandhi's fast is set out clearly and in detail in the communique which they issued on Feb. 10."

At the Leaders' Conference in New Delhi, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, moving the resolution urging the unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi, said that his plea was that Mahatma Gandhi's release was essentially necessary in the interests of fairness and justice.

21st. The Bombay Government issued a communique stating that Mahatma Gandhi was extremely weak and if the fast was not ended without delay, it might be too late to save his life.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, at a Press Conference in New Delhi, said : "We should be prepared for the worst but I should very strongly deprecate any demonstration leading to the disturbance of the peace."

The Standing Committee of the Leaders' Conference held a discussion in New Delhi, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru presiding, on the Viceroy's reply to the resolution passed by the conference with regard to the request for the release of Mahatma Gandhi, and unanimously approved a cable to be sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill.

The annual meeting of the Numismatic Society of India was held at Jaipur. Sir Mirza Ismail, Prime Minister, Jaipur, delivered the inaugural address.

At a meeting of the Working Committee of the All-Parties' Sikh Conference held at Lahore, under the presidency of Sardar Baldeo Singh, Development Minister, Punjab, the situation created by Mahatma Gandhi's fast was discussed. The meeting decided to send a telegram to His Excellency the Viceroy urging the immediate unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi in the interests of peace and future relations of Great Britain and India.

22nd. The doctor's report on Mahatma Gandhi's condition stated that he rallied from a crisis and slept for about 5½ hrs.

The Bengal Legislative Council had a brief session when the excess demands for a grant of about Re. 50,000 for 1940-41, presented to the House by Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, at an earlier meeting came up for consideration.

An 86-page booklet entitled "Congress Responsibility for the disturbances, 1942-43" related the troubles which followed "the sanctioning of a mass movement by the A. I. C. C. on Aug. 8, 1942."

"The *Manchester Guardian*", in the course of a leader on Mahatma Gandhi, said : "What the India Government and our government have to consider is not merely the barren question as to who is responsible for the disorders of last autumn, but the question as to what sort of India with what new and harder problems to solve will face us if Mr. Gandhi dies."

The Central Legislative Assembly concluded discussion on the motion moved by Mr. N. R. Sarker, "that the situation in this country as regards food, fuel, drugs and the production and distribution of standard cloth be taken into consideration."

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, a point of constitutional importance was raised by Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal when he sought on a point of order, a ruling from the chair, as to whether the house had a right to know what advice a Minister had tendered to the governor in relation to a particular matter.

The Council of State held a general discussion on the railway budget.—Sir Edward Benthall referred to the manufacture of locomotives in India, and said that the Government had already decided to manufacture them in India. He referred to the recommendations of the Humphrey—Srinivasan Committee.

23rd. The medical report on Mahatma Gandhi's condition stated that there was no appreciable change to record.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Edward Benthall, the Transport Member, Government of India, in the course of the debate on problems of post-war reconstruction, indicated the possibility of railways running air services in India after the war.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutt, Leader of the official Congress Party, and Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hossain, Leader of the Muslim League Opposition, participated in the general discussion of the Budget.

Mr. Roosevelt received telegrams from a number of Americans including Pearl Buck, asking him to use his good offices to urge the unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi and reopening negotiations between British and Indian leaders.

24th. The medical report on Mahatma Gandhi's condition stated that Mahatma Gandhi's general condition showed a slight improvement.

Mr. Churohill, replying to the cable sent to him by the Leaders' Conference Committee urging Mahatma Gandhi's immediate release, endorsed the Government of India's policy.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, general discussion on the Budget was continued.

The Central Legislative Assembly concluded discussion on the Railway Budget which was passed.

In the Council of State, the necessity for giving the executive authority a free hand in all matters concerning the prosecution of the war was stressed.

- 25th. The medical report on Mahatma Gandhi's condition stated that he had made no further progress. There was no appreciable change in his condition.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery, answering questions in the House of Commons, said that the British Government entirely agreed with the decision of the Government of India not to yield to Mr. Gandhi's efforts to enforce his unconditional release.

The Bengal Legislative Council concluded general discussion of the Budget.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, the Defence Secretary, Mr. C. N. Trivedi introduced a Bill further to amend the Indian Army Act of 1911 and the Indian Air Force Act of 1932.

- 26th. Prayers for "all those devoted to the service of India and especially for Mr. Gandhi" were offered by the Bishop of Southwark at St. Martin-in-the-fields. Mr. N. R. Sarkar, who resigned from the Viceroy's Executive Council, issued a statement regarding his resignation.

Mr. R. R. Haddow, in his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, explained the attitude of the European commercial and industrial interests, as represented by the Chamber, towards the crisis in India as also towards the wider issue of India's political and constitutional future.

The time of the Bengal Legislative Council was occupied with the discussion of the supplementary demand for the current year amounting to over Rs. 3 crores presented by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

Plans for a memorial in Britain to Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore were discussed by the Executive Committee of the Tagore Society.

A report received from Palghat said that Mr. P. Achutha Menon, I. C. S. Collector of Guntur, was appointed Agent-general for India in Washington, in succession to Sir G. S. Bajpai.

- 27th. Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, introducing the India Budget for 1943-44, in the Central Legislative Assembly disclosed a revenue deficit of Rs. 94.66 crores for the current year and a prospective deficit of 60.28 crores next year on the basis of existing taxation.—The Finance Member urged the need for economy in personal expenditure. He said that during the war there was an obvious alternative to private spending which most powerfully assisted the war effort—investment in loans of the Government of India on the largest possible scale.

The Government of Bombay served an order on the keeper of the *Janmabhoomi Mudranalaya* declaring the Press to be forfeited to His Majesty.

- 28th. The Bombay Government issued a press communique on Mahatma Gandhi's condition. "Mr Gandhi's general condition shows improvement. He is alert and in good spirits."

The Sargent Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board observed: "If India wants her children to be taught properly, she must be prepared to pay her teachers properly or face the alternative which is permanent inferiority in the society of civilized nations".

A large number of visitors saw Mahatma Gandhi and most of them were his personal friends or his own relatives.

March 1943

Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast on the 3rd. March at 9-34. I.S.T. All the six doctors who had been attending on him during his 21 days fast were present.

Sir Bijay Prosad Singh Roy, former Revenue Minister, was elected President of the Bengal Legislative Council.

Some Associations and Congress Committees were declared unlawful

under the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act: The All-India Spinners' Association in College Street and Ashutosh Mukherjee Road, Calcutta, Burdwan District Congress Committee, Katwa Sub-divisional Congress Committee and Katwa Town Congress Committee (suspended).

The Council of State held a general discussion on the Budget—Sir K. V. Menon dwelt on the urgent need of mitigating the hardships caused by the rise in prices, especially of foodstuffs.

Sir M. Usman, Leader of the House, declared: "No restrictions have been placed by the Afghan Government specifically against Indian traders and nationals in Afghanistan."

Mr. M. A. Jinnah was re-elected President of the All-India Muslim League.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Sultan Ahmed, Leader of the House, indicated the prospect of two more sessions instead of the usual Autumn session in September.

The All-India non-Congress leaders who met in Bombay, expressed the opinion that both the government and the Congress should reconsider their policy and their talks with Mahatma Gandhi led them to believe that a move for reconciliation would bear fruit.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, in a speech at Birmingham emphasized the part played by the Dominions and India, in the war.

His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to approve the continuance in office of the Hon. Sir Reginald Maxwell, K.C.S.I. C.I.B. Home Member, Government of India.

The Sargent Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education, made recommendations for a minimum national scale of salaries for teachers in schools of all grades.

Master Tara Singh, in his presidential address at the 4th. All-India Akali Conference observed inter alia: "I deprecate any differences between the Hindus and the Sikhs, but I wish to mould the latter into a separate political entity with independent thought".

Mr. J. Van Manen, formerly general secretary, Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal, died in Calcutta.

The Pir Pagaro was sentenced to death by a Martial Law Court, for conspiring to wage war against the King.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed the Tobacco Excise Bill.

The All-India Indian Christian Conference put forward the demand that a round table conference should be convened immediately in India to solve the political problems.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was released from detention on grounds of health.

The Pakistan Day was observed on the 23rd. March—Mr. Jinnah sent a message to the Muslims of India, stating that the 'Pakistan Scheme' was the final national goal of Muslim India.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, a Bill to validate marriages between Hindus belonging to the same "gotra" or "pravar" and between Hindus belonging to different sub-divisions of the same caste was discussed.

Sardar Gurubux Naurang, presiding over the 3rd. Prachar Conference of the Sikhs of northern India, observed: The Sikhs as a nation are prepared to forego all their claims to communal representations at the altar of nationalism if the Muslims and others also give up their claims and the communal award.....ceases to exist."

Mr. S. Satyamurti died in Madras.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq resigned his office as Chief Minister of Bengal.

H. E. the Governor of Bengal brought into force Sec. 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, and took upon himself the administration of the Province.

In the Council of State, General Sir Alan Hartley said that the Government were considering the extension of the Indian Air Training Corps to four of the universities besides Aligarh.

1st. In the communique issued by the Bombay Government on Mahatma Gandhi's condition, it was stated that he was in good spirits.—It was the 21st. day of Mahatma Gandhi's fast.

Dr. Y. H. Ku, leader of the Chinese Educational Mission, addressing Press correspondents in Delhi, said: 'Our mission is simple. The Generalissimo has sent us here, in response to the kind invitation of H. E. the Viceroy, representing the Government and people of India, to make a first-hand study of various educational and cultural institutions throughout India.'

The food position in Bombay was reviewed at a meeting of the Food Advisory Council, Bombay. Mr. H. F. Knight, Adviser to the Governor, presided.

Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor of the U. P. in an appeal in connexion with Red Cross week, said that the U. P. should aim at collecting Rs. 30 lakhs during the year 1945.

In the Sind Legislative Assembly, the general discussion of the budget concluded.—The Premier and Finance Minister, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, replying to the debate, rebutted the charge that the revenue returns had been underestimated.

Mr. Syed Nausber Ali, ex-Minister, was elected speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

In the Orissa Legislative Assembly, Pandit Godavaris Misra, Finance Minister, in presenting the Budget, disclosed a deficit of Rs 3.81 lakhs in the Budget estimate for 1943-44.

2nd. The Central Legislative Assembly agreed to Sir Edward Benthall's resolution recommending certain interim changes (as wartime arrangement) in the convention of 1924, separating Railway Finance from General Finance.

In the Council of State, an adjournment motion by Mr. A. Imam seeking to discuss "the unsatisfactory arrangement between H. M. Government and the Government of India regarding defence expenditure" was disallowed by the President, Sir David Devadoss, on the ground that the subject could be discussed during the general debate on the new Budget.

Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy, former Revenue Minister, was elected President of the Bengal Legislative Council.

3rd. Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast at 9. 34. I.S.T. All the six doctors who had been attending on him during his 21 days' fast were present. Besides the doctors, only inmates of the detention camp were present.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Minister for Public Health and Local self-Government introduced the Bengal Vagrancy Bill, whereby Government proposed to take powers to collect all genuine vagrants and place them in homes established by the Government.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed Mr. Mohd. Abdul Gani's Bill to provide for the better administration of Muslim wakfs in Delhi Province as reported and amended by the joint committee. Two amendments by the mover were also incorporated.

The Sind Legislative Assembly passed by 24 votes to 3, a non-official resolution on Pakistan moved by Mr. G. M. Syed, a member of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, when the Bill introduced by the Revenue Minister to amend the Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Act 1940 came up for consideration, the President after consulting the opinions of the Minister-in-charge and party leaders, postponed consideration of the Bill.

The following Associations and Congress Committees were declared unlawful under the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act:—The All-India Spinners' Association in College Street and Ashutosh Mukherjee Road, Calcutta, Burdwan

District Congress Committee, Katwa Subdivisional Congress Committee and Katwa Town Congress Committee (suspended)

Haripala Congress office (Hooghly District) known as the "Haripal Kalyan Sangha" was declared as a place used "for the purpose of unlawful association".

- 4th. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly, supplementary estimates of expenditure for the current year, aggregating Rs. 2,38,00,000 were presented by Sir Manohar Lal, Finance Minister.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed Mr. Govind Deshmukh's Reciprocity Bill providing that persons domiciled in any British possession shall be entitled only to such rights and privileges as regards entry, travel, residence, acquisition, holding and disposal of property, educational facilities, franchise, the holding of public office or the carrying on of any occupation, business, trade or profession in British India as are accorded by the law or administration of such possession to persons of Indian origin.

- 5th. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Sir Manohar Lal, Finance Minister anticipated a surplus of Rs. 6 lakhs in the current years on the basis of the revised estimates and a likely surplus of Rs. 50 lakhs in the coming year.

In the Orissa Legislative Assembly, the Budget proposals were discussed.

The Bengal Legislative Council passed a non-official resolution urging the allotment of "sufficient funds" in next year's Budget "for small irrigational projects" in E. and N. Bengal "for the purpose of reclaiming cultivable waste lands."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, strong support for the Budget proposals was expressed by Sir Henry Richardson, leader of the European group, opening the general debate on the Budget.

- 6th. The Council of State held a general discussion on the Budget.—Sir K. R. Menon dwelt on the urgent need of mitigating the hardships caused by the rise in prices, especially of foodstuffs.

Sir M. Usman, Leader of the House, declared: "No restrictions have been imposed by the Afghan Government specifically against Indian traders and nationals in Afghanistan."

- 7th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah was re-elected President of the All-India Muslim League.

At the session of the All-India Muslim League Council, the Secretary of the League announced in New Delhi, that all Provincial Leagues had unanimously recommended Mr. Jinnah's name for the presidentship. The Council thereupon re-elected Mr. Jinnah as President.

Dr. B. C. Roy, presiding at a meeting of the staff and students of the Calcutta University in observance of the Thanks-giving Day for the successful termination of Mahatmaji's fast, revealed what Mahatma Gandhi had said after the fast was over: "I do not know why Providence has saved me on this occasion. Possibly, it is because he has some more mission for me to fulfil."

At the meeting of the Muslim League Council in New Delhi, the position of the Muslim members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly in relation to the League was explained by the Punjab Premier. Lt. Col. Malik Khizar Hayat Khan.

- 8th. The Central Legislative Assembly rejected without a division Sardar Sant Singh's motion to discuss the repressive policy of the government."

In the Assam Legislative Assembly, Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhuri, Finance Minister, disclosed an estimated revenue deficit of Rs. 10,10,000 in introducing the Assam Budget for 1943-44.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the food situation was discussed, when the Government policy in this regard was criticised.

- 9th. In the Bengal Legislative Council, a statement renewing the food situation in the province was made by the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, Minister for Commerce and Labour, when the discussion on the resolution tabled by the Muslim League opposition relating to the problem of food supply was resumed.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, the prospect of two more sessions instead of the usual Autumn session in September was indicated by Sir Sultan Ahmed, Leader of the House.

- 10th. The Central Legislative Assembly rejected by thirty nine votes to twenty four the cut motion moved by Mr. Yusuf Haroon, Muslim League member from Sind, to discuss the administration of Martial Law in Sind.

In the Council of State, replying to Mr. Hoosain Imam's supplementary

question, Sir Mahomed Usman, Member for Posts and Air Services, gave the following assurance: "The question of protecting the best interests of the Muslim and other minority communities in my departments is under the active consideration of the Government."

The Council of State resumed discussion of Mr. Dalal's resolution relating to the utilization of sterling balances held in London.

In the Assam Legislative Assembly, general discussion of the Budget was initiated by Mr. Baidyanath Mukherji.

The authorities of the Calcutta University received a letter from the Educational Commissioner, Government of India, asking them to recommend 5 or 6 post-graduate students who would like to go to China under the Government of India's scheme for the exchange of research students between Universities in China and India.

The All India Leaders, who met in Bombay at the residence of Mr. M. R. Jayakar, issued the following statement:—"We are of opinion that the deplorable events of the last few months require a reconsideration of their policy both by the Government and the Congress. The recent talks which some of us have had with Gandhiji lead us to believe that a move for reconciliation at the present juncture will bear fruit."

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, in a statement to the Press said: "The resolution regarding Pakistan passed by the Muslim League majority in the Sind Assembly is an indication of a general policy which is likely to be followed by those few legislatures and those local or district representative institutions which the Muslim Leagues or Muslims in general may happen to hold in their grip."

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the House rejected by 92 to 78 votes, the Muslim League opposition's amendment which sought to censure the Government for its alleged failure to tackle satisfactorily the food situation in the province.

In the Assam Legislative Council, a statement on the rice position in Assam was made by Sir M. Saadulla, Premier, replying to a debate raised through a resolution moved by Mr. Satyendra Mohan Lahiry who urged stoppage of export of rice from the province.

- 11th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, was asked in the House of Commons about the Conferences of non-Congress leaders at Delhi and Bombay.—Mr. Amery said: "I have no statement to make regarding this, which, so far as I know, has not yet been communicated to the Government of India."

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the desirability of the government making their decision on the recommendation of the Flood Commission and giving effect to it within the next financial year was urged.

The Bengal Government in a Press note declared categorically that there would be no statutory maximum price for wholesale transactions in paddy or rice.

The Central Legislative Assembly began the debate on the first reading of the Finance Bill.

- 12th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, in a speech at Birmingham emphasized the part played by the Dominions and India in the war.

Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi were paid by the M. P.'s, Mr. Rhys Davies, Mr. Samuel Silverman and Mr. W. G. Cove and by the novelists, Vera Brittain and Ethel Mannin, at a Press Luncheon Conference held by the Committee of Indian Congressmen in Britain, in London.

The Bengal Legislative Council adopted a non-official resolution urging that 90 p. c. of the expenditure on civil defence measures in the province be met from Central revenues. The Governor was requested to make a representation to the Government of India.

The Budget debate in the Assam Assembly concluded.

Mr. J. Jones, Chairman of the Indian Tea Association, addressing that body's annual meeting in Calcutta, said: "Despite difficulties arising out of the war, tea gardens of N. E. India produced the greatest crop that has ever been made and also maintained the high standard of manufacture which was established when crops were smaller."

A Communique stated: "His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve the continuance in office of the Hon. Sir Reginald Maxwell, K.C.B., C.I.E., Home Member in the Government of India for a further period."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, on the resumption of the debate on the 1st. reading of the Finance Bill, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed commented on the

preference shown to the textile industry by the supply department at the expense of other industries particularly leather.

- 13th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister, announced the decision of the Government of Bengal to set up a permanent Court for adjudication of labour disputes, as was done in Bombay.

Proposals for supplementary grants, to meet excess expenditure in a few departments in 1942-43, were approved at a meeting of the Standing Finance Committee held in New Delhi—Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member to the Government of India, presiding.

The Sargent Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education to consider the question of training, recruitment and condition of service of teachers, made recommendations for a minimum national scale of salaries for teachers in schools of all grades, both in the rural and urban areas, and for employing only qualified and well trained teachers in the schools.—The report was forwarded to Provincial Governments for action.

The Select Committee appointed by the Orissa Legislative Assembly approved the Orissa University Bill with certain important changes.

- 14th. Master Tara Singh, in his presidential address at the 4th. All-India Akali Conference held at Bhowanigarh (Patiala State), observed : " I deprecate any difference between the Hindus and the Sikhs, but I wish to mould the latter into a separate political entity with independent thought. Certain Hindus, with the backing of a powerful press, like to dominate Sikh politics and they cannot brook any independent thinking on our part. The Azad Punjab scheme will free the Hindus and the Sikhs alike from the shackle of Muslim domination. I am prepared to give up the scheme only if the Hindus convince me of its negative value to them."

- 15th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, an authoritative statement on communal representation in the services of the Supply Department was made by Mr. F. A. Mackeown, Joint Secretary, when the debate on the first reading of the Finance Bill was resumed.

A Press Note from New Delhi said : " It has been decided to create several posts of Regional Food Commissioners for the better co-ordination and control of food supplies all over India, including the Indian States, and to assist all governments in the application of the All-India places for dealing with food matters. This decision is the result of unanimous recommendation made to the Government at the 2nd. All-India Food Conference held here in February."

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the decisions of the Government of Bengal on the Land Revenue Commissioner's recommendations were announced by Mr. P. N. Banerjee, Revenue Minister.—The Commission had recommended the abolition of Permanent Settlement and acquisitions by the State of all rent-receiving interests with a view to bringing the cultivators directly under the government.

- 16th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, replying to charges of government "extravagance" in the use of paper, pointed out that, while shortage of paper did exist, there was no acute suffering. He gave figures of publication in England and India and said that, while in England in 1940, 11,000 publications were issued, the figure for India was 15,000.

- 17th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, by 48 votes to 21, the 1st. reading of the Finance Bill was passed. The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was passed.

When the House resumed discussion of the Bill, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, Leader, Nationalist Party complained that the Finance Member's reply in the question of sterling balance was unsatisfactory and asked that a committee of the House be appointed to place itself in touch with the currents of thought abroad and safeguard the interests of the country.

Mr. T. S. Pillay, Joint Secretary, Commerce Department, following the recommendations of the International Tea Committee that the existing international tea agreement among tea producers be extended beyond March 31, 1943, for the period of hostilities and two financial years thereafter, a Bill was introduced in the Central Assembly to make necessary amendment to the Tea Control Act, 1938.

The death occurred at the Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta of Mr. John Van Manen, formerly General Secretary, Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal.

18th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India was asked if he had considered the report of the Bombay Conference of Non-Congress Leaders and what response had been made to their plea.—He replied: "The resolution passed by the Bombay Conference contemplated an approach to the Viceroy. I am not aware that any such approach has yet been made. Meantime, I am not prepared to make any further statement on the matter of the resolution".

Mr. M. S. Aney, addressing the Yeotmal District Association, at Yeotmal, said: "I stand today for the same principles and the same line of action that I stood for when I accepted office, and I believe it is necessary to co-operate with the Government in the war efforts to defeat the Axis Powers."

A Sind Government Communique stated: "The Pir Pagaro has been sentenced to death by a Martial Law Court on a charge of conspiring to wage war against the King."

Mr. A. C. Sen, President, Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, presiding over the annual meeting of that body in Calcutta, discussed the position regarding supply of foodstuffs, particularly rice and atta.

The Central Assembly passed the Finance Bill without division, after agreeing to official amendments of minor character.

Sir Purushottamdas, Chairman of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, addressed a letter to the Government of India regarding Ceylon's request for Indian labour.

19th. Sir Maharaj Singh, delivering his presidential speech at the 25th. Session of the All-India Conference of Indian Christians, in New Delhi, said: "I feel even at this late stage that a small Conference of Hindu, Muslim, Indian Christian, Sikh and Parsi leaders should be convened to deal with the present political situation, for there cannot be peace in India or full co-operation in the war effort while thousands of our fellow countrymen are in detention and sabotage continues".

The Assam Legislative Assembly passed all demands for grants under police, public health, education (other than European) and medical. The cut motions were either lost or withdrawn.

20th. The Rt. Hon. Sir John Colville, Governor-Designate of Bombay, arrived in Karachi.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed the Tobacco Excise Bill by 42 votes to 23. The Muslim League and Nationalists voted against the Bill.

A number of questions were put in the Assembly, on the appointment of Maj. Gen. Wood as Administrator-General, Eastern Frontier Communications in Mar. 1942.

The Council of State held a 2 min. sitting when the Secretary laid on the table the Indian Finance Bill, the Tobacco Excise Bill and the Vegetable Product Excise Bill, as passed by the Assembly.

The All-India Indian Christian Conference, in New Delhi, put forward the demand that a round table conference should be convened immediately in India to solve the constitutional problems.

21st. In response to request made to him by newspaper editors for a round-table conference to review the working of the A. I. N. E. C. resolution of October 1942, the Minister for Home Affairs, Sind, convened a Conference at Karachi at which all the editors of Karachi newspapers and the Provincial Press Adviser were present.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who was released from detention on grounds of health, arrived at Parnakuti.

22nd. The Government of Madras issued a Press Communique detailing their budget estimates for 1943-44.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the question of rice shortage was again raised.

In the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Malik Khizr Hyat Khan Tiwana, Premier, declared: "I stand by the commitments made by my predecessor, the late Sir Sikander Hyat Khan."

23rd. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in a message to the Muslims of India on Pakistan Day says: "Today (Mar. 23) is a day of great significance to Muslim India. On this auspicious day, 3 years ago, was declared at Lahore, for the first time authoritatively from the platform of the All-India Muslim League the final National goal of Muslim India, which later on came to be known as the "Pakistan scheme".

Sir John Colville, Governor-designate of Bombay arrived in Bombay.

The Central Legislative Assembly carried without a division the motion of the War Transport Member, Sir Edward Benthall, for the election of a Committee of 9 to serve with the war Transport and Finance Members, and the Financial Commissioner, Railways, to consider matters arising out of Clause iv of the Railway Convention resolution adopted by the House earlier in the season.

The text of the Viceroy's reply to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, which was communicated by the latter to Mr. M. R. Jayakar, formed the subject matter of prolonged discussion at Mr. Jayakar's place in Bombay, when Mr. K. M. Munshi and Mr. Bhulabhai Desai were present.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, presiding at a meeting of the Muslim community in observance of the Pakistan Day in Calcutta, expressed the hope that after his fast, Mahatma Gandhi would throw all his weight in favour of an agreement between Hindus and Muslims.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, a four-day debate on the food situation in the Province concluded, when the House, by 16 to 15 votes, passed a Government party member's amendment on the subject.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, what he described as a motion of censure of the Bengal Ministry, was moved on behalf of the Muslim League Opposition by Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, ex-Minister, when the demand for a grant under General Administration was taken up.

- 24th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. Hussainbhai Lalji sought leave for an adjournment motion to discuss "the urgent necessity" to impress on H. M. G. the importance of keeping in close contact with India in the same way as they were keeping in contact with the Dominions, Allies and friends in the matter of the future management of exchange and international currency before agreements were arrived at.

Sir John Colville was sworn in as Governor of Bombay. The Chief Justice of Bombay, Sir John Beaumont administered the oath.

In the Council of State, the attention of the Government was drawn to the Viceroy's remark in one of his letters to Mahatma Gandhi, which stated: "You may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later and it will then be for you and your colleagues to clear yourselves before the world if you can".

Sir Mohammad Zafrulla Khan, giving impressions of his tour in an interview said: "American interest in the Indian problem is extremely keen and the Americans are deeply sympathetic towards Indian aspirations, but their knowledge of the factors of the Indian situation is neither deep nor accurate".

- 25th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachar moved his resolution recommending drastic revision of the Government's policy on the treatment of political prisoners and detenus and asking that members of the Central Legislature should be allowed to visit prisons and interview political prisoners so that they could draw attention to the inconveniences and restrictions imposed on these prisoners with a view to eliminating them.

In the direct election to the Bengal Council, 5 candidates belonging to the Muslim League were declared elected.

In the Council of State, the Indian Finance Bill as passed by the Lower House, came up for consideration.

- 26th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, a Bill to validate marriages between Hindus belonging to the same "Gotra" or "Pravar" and between Hindus belonging to different subdivisions of the same caste was discussed on a motion by the mover, Mr. Govind Deshmukh, who asked for its reference to a select committee.

Sardar Gurbux Singh Naurang, a Sikh leader of Lahore, presiding over the Third Prachar Conference of the Sikhs of Northern India at Paontu Sahib, observed: "The Sikhs as a nation are prepared to forego all their claims to communal representation at the altar of nationalism if the Muslims and others also give up their communal claims, and the communal award, which is the biggest block in the path of nationalism, ceases to exist".

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. Fazlul Huq, replying to a question, said that two women were killed as a result of practice shooting in the evacuated area in Sonarpur Thana, 24-Pargannas District.

The Council of State passed the Finance Bill by 20 votes to 12.

27th. The position of the Bengal Ministry was discussed at a meeting of the working committee of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha, held in Calcutta, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee presiding.

In the Orissa Legislative Assembly, replying to the question standing in the name of Mr. Jagannath Misra (Congress), Mr. Pyari Shankar Roy, Parliamentary Secretary, stated that Mr. Biswanath Das, leader of the Orissa Assembly Congress Party had sent a motion of no-confidence in the Ministry from Berhampore jail.

The 16th annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry which met in New Delhi, with Mr. G. L. Mehta, President, in the Chair, passed three resolutions put from the chair on the political situation, India's participation in international conferences and the sale of Indian silver in England.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, by a majority of 20 votes, a cut motion moved by Mr. K. A. Hamilton (European group) in connexion with the budget demand under the head "Extraordinary charges in India", censuring the Government for alleged failure to deal with black markets and speculation in hoarding of foodstuffs was rejected.—The voting being 109 to 99.

28th. Mr. S. Satyamurti died in Madras.

A surplus of Rs. 61 lakhs was estimated in the Bihar Government Budget for 1943-44.

29th. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq resigned his office as Chief Minister of Bengal. His resignation was accepted by H. E. the Governor.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. J. A. Mackeown, Joint Secretary, Supply Department, told Mr. K. C. Neogy that the Government of India had instructed the Indian Supply Mission in Washington to endeavour to power alcohol plants on Lend-Lease terms. The policy of the Government of India was to encourage the production of power alcohol.

In the Council of State, replying to a question by R. B. Lala Ram Saran Das, General Sir Alan Hartley, Deputy Commander-in-chief, India, said that the Government were considering the extension of the Indian Air Training Corps to four other Universities besides Aligarh, in 1943, and it was expected that this would be done immediately. The Council adopted the Tobacco Excise Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly.

The Central Assembly resumed the debate on Sir Sultan Ahmed's motion for reference to joint committee of the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill.

30th. In the House of Commons, there was a large gathering of members for the debate on the general situation in India.—The debate took place on a series of formal Government motions asking the House to approve the continuances in force, for a further 12 months, of the proclamations made under Sec. 93 of the Government of India Act, by which emergency regimes were established in 6 Indian Provinces towards the end of 1939 following on the resignations of Congress Ministries soon after the outbreak of the war.—The Secretary of State, Mr. Amery said: "The resolutions before the House concern only 6 out of 4 provinces of India. In the remaining 5 provinces, Indian Ministers responsible to the Indian Legislatures control a vast majority of the subjects affecting the daily life of their fellow citizens. It is only in provinces controlled by the Congress Party organization that self-Government was suspended by the order of the so-called High Command of the Congress Party in Oct. 1939. The consequent emergency provisions properly come before this House for a periodic review and are under constant review by the Viceroy and the Governor concerned".

The deadlock created by the resignation of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister, Bengal, remained unsolved. Mr. Huq had an interview with the Governor after which the seven Ministers met the Governor when the whole situation was reviewed from all aspects.

Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, Leader of the Muslim League Parliamentary Party, saw the Governor and had a long discussion with him.

The Central Legislative Assembly agreed without a division to refer the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill to a joint select committee of both Houses consisting of 18 members.

The Council of State adopted the official Bill to amend further the Indian Tea Control Act as passed by the Assembly.

81st. A communique from the Government House, Calcutta, announced : "The Governor of Bengal has brought into force the provisions of Sec. 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, and has taken upon himself the administration of the province."

April 1943

His Excellency the Viceroy declined to grant facilities to Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and other leaders to meet Mahatma Gandhi.

His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, in pursuance of a Proclamation issued by him under sec. 93 of the Government of India Act, authorised the estimate of expenditure for 1943-44.

The Central Legislative Assembly concluded its Budget Session.

The Council of State concluded its Budget Session after adopting the Military Prisons Bill, the Trade Marks Bill and the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act Amending Bill as passed by the Central Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Rajagopalachari issued a statement, on the Viceroy's reply to the memorandum of the delegation of the Leaders' Conference, which said : "The Conference hoped that this would lead to a solution of the Indian problem."

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, in the course of a reply in the House of Commons, said : "There would be great objections to consultations with the Congress leaders without a definite assurance and guarantee of a different line of conduct of their part."

Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin accepted His Excellency the Governor of Bengal's invitation to form a Ministry.

The Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes met in New Delhi, under the Chairmanship of the Jam Sahib, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes.

The Federal Court held that the Defence of India Rule 26 was invalid.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, told a questioner in the House of Commons, that he had no statement to make concerning the Indian Legislation in South Africa.

The Bill to restrict the purchase of lands by Indians in Natal and the Transvaal passed its third reading in the South African Assembly.

A new Ministry was formed in Bengal, with Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin as Chief Minister. The Ministers of whom seven were Muslims and six Hindus, took their oaths of office.

General Smuts declared emphatically that the Union Government was determined to proceed with the Indian Bill and place it on statute.

The open session of the All-India Muslim League met in New Delhi, under the presidency of Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

The All-India Muslim League adopted a resolution empowering the President, Mr. Jinnah, to take till the next session of the League every step he might consider necessary to further the object of the Muslim League.

The Women's Branch of the Muslim League reaffirmed their faith in Pakistan and assured Mr. Jinnah of their full support.

In a Communique issued by the Government of India it was stated : "The Legislation introduced in South Africa by the Union Government to extend the so-called interim Act in the Transvaal for a period of

three years and to apply similar provisions to Natal has now passed all its stages. The Government of India cannot but regard this news with profound regret and scorn."

An Ordinance Validating the action already taken under the Defence of India Rule 26 and amending the D. I. Act was published in New Delhi.

In a resolution passed by the All-India Momin Conference in New Delhi, the claim that it represented the $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores of Momins and that no other party or organization had any right to represent them was put forward.

- 1st. His Excellency the Viceroy declined to grant facilities to Mr. Rajagopalachari and other leaders to meet Mahatma Gandhi because there was "no reason to believe that Mr. Gandhi is any more ready now than he was at an earlier stage to repudiate the policy as the result of which the Congress leaders are at present under detention".

A Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary stated: "The Governor of Bengal has in pursuance of the proclamation issued by him under Sec. 93, of the Government of India Act, authorized the estimate of expenditure for 1943-44".

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, in a statement to the Press explained the Progressive Coalition Party's conception of the principles on which an all Parties Government in the province should be based.

- 2nd. The Central Legislative Assembly concluded its Budget Session.

Mr. R. L. Nopany, presiding at the annual meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, reviewed the economic situation in the country.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, in a statement, said: "I am surprised by the Gazette notification published regarding our resignation that my resignation has been accepted with effect from the 29th March. This is contrary to facts".

- 3rd. The Council of State concluded its Budget Session after adopting the Military Prisons Bill, the Trade Marks Bill and the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act Amendment Bill, as passed by the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Sakarlal Balabhai, addressing the annual general meeting of the Ahmedabad Millowners' Association, at Ahmedabad, stated that the textile industry during the year had enjoyed a spell of prosperity.

- 4th. A Press Note from New Delhi said: "The Grow More Food" campaign which was launched last year resulted in an increase of the area cultivated with food grains by over 8,00,000 acres".

Sir Azizul Haque, High Commissioner for India in London, arrived in Calcutta from Hazaribagh.

A Press Note from New Delhi announced: "The New Indian Standard Time is to continue for the duration of the war."

- 5th. A donation of Rs. 4,12,902 subscribed by the people of Britain, in aid of Cyclone relief, was presented to H. E. the Governor of Bengal by Sir Aziz-ul Haque, High Commissioner for India in London at a meeting of the Central Cyclone Relief Committee held at Government House, Calcutta.

Mr. Rajagopalachari issued a statement on the Viceroy's reply to the memorandum of the delegation of the Leaders' Conference. He stated inter alia,— "The Viceroy's reply to our memorandum in rejecting our request for permission to see Gandhiji must cause profound disappointment throughout the country. Since we were denied the opportunity of a personal discussion with H. E. and it was not possible to anticipate the points urged in H. E.'s reply, it becomes necessary to issue this statement.....The Conference hoped that this would lead to a solution of the Indian problem."

The All-India Kisan Conference passed a resolution criticizing the Viceroy's action in refusing permission to leaders to meet Mahatma Gandhi and urging the release of the Mahatma and other Congress leaders for a Congress-League settlement for establishing a national government.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, in a statement to the Press, observed: "There is no question of Mr. Amery taking shelter behind the extreme views expressed by the Hindu Mahasabha regarding Indian nationalism."

6th. The India situation was debated in the House of Lords on a series of government motions to approve the 12 months' extension of the proclamations under the Government of India Act in reference to six Indian provinces. Similar motions were approved by the House of Commons.

Prof. Laski, writing in "*Reynolds News*", under the caption "Indian Danger", said : "I don't think it is either legitimate or wise for the British Government to place the whole responsibility for the present deadlock on Mr. Gandhi."

7th. The report of Mr. Justice F. N. Broome on Indian infiltration in Durban was tabled in the South African Assembly, and a special meeting of the Union Cabinet was held to consider questions arising from the report.

8th. A Communique from New Delhi stated : "The Government of India have learnt with regret that the Government of South Africa have announced their intention to extend the interim Act in the Transvaal and to apply similar provisions in Durban and possibly elsewhere in Natal. The Government of India had addressed a representation to the Union Government in respect of the Transvaal Act and had asked for an opportunity to comment on any proposals which the Union Government might be considering for the purpose of minimising transfers of property between Europeans and Indians in Natal. They observe with concern that the Union Government have found themselves unable to comply with either of their requests. They have addressed a further urgent communication to the Union Government and anxiously await the Government's reply."

9th. Begum Azad, wife of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, died in Calcutta.

Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said it should not be necessary for him to repeat his previous assurance that efforts of Indian political leaders to find a measure of agreement continue to be welcomed by His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy. He made it clear the other day that there would be great objection to consultations with the Congress leaders without a definite assurance and guarantee of a different line of conduct on their part, and the leaders had been meeting frequently though he regretted without agreement.

A Press Note from New Delhi said : "The Indian Government have been invited through their Agent-general in Washington to send a small number technical and expert representatives to a conference to be convened in America by the U. S. Government by the end of April for an exploratory examination of post-war problems regarding foodstuffs and other essential agricultural products including problems of nutrition."

10th. Raja Maheswar Dayal Seth, in his presidential address at the Jwalpur (Hardwar) Hindu Sabha Conference, criticized the policy and programme of the Hindu Mahasabha. The Raja in the course of his address observed : "It is clear that the British Government does not want to transfer power, and the recent refusal of the Viceroy to allow any personal contact with Mahatma Gandhi has brought into bold relief their pre-determined decision to rule out, as long as possible, any approach to reconciliation."

The Minister of Interior, Mr. Lawrence, introduced a bill in the House of Assembly which proposed to impose restrictions on the acquisition and occupation of land by Asiatics in Natal and to reimpose for a further period the restrictions on trading by Asiatics in Transvaal.—The Bill passed the first reading.

Mr. K. M. Munshi, in a Press statement, said : Mr. Amery's reply to Mr. Graham White in the House of Commons bears the usual characteristics of Mr. Amery's statements."

11th. 20 economists of India including Mr. V. G. Kale, Mr. K. T. Shah, Mr. C. N. Vakeel, and Mr. D. R. Gadgil, issued a statement from Bombay, which said : "Inflation is the most inequitable way of distributing the war burden and usually involves large transfers of wealth from the poorer and the middle classes to the richer classes. It is also undesirable because it increases the cost of war and impairs the war effort by hindering production."

Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, declaring open the second session of the All Bengal Economic Conference, urged that in any plan for future world reconstruction, it was essential that India should be given full political and economic freedom to evolve a balanced economy by a more rapid process of industrialisation.

Mrs. Violet Alva, Organizing Secretary of the All India Christian Conference, was arrested at Chaupathi under the Defence of India Rules.

- 12th. The Natal Indian Congress submitted a statement to the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Lawrence, urging the Government not to introduce "segregation measures." The introduction of "pegging" legislation would be totally inconsistent with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, with the democratic system of Government and with Government's obligations under the Cape-town Agreement.

Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherjee, presiding over the All-India National Educational Conference at Hardwar, said that national education should minister to the moral and material needs of the nation in consonance with its indigenous ideals and traditions. National education must be rooted in the heritage of the past.

- 13th. An announcement from Government House, Calcutta, said : "The Governor of Bengal today received Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and informed him that, with a view to his being able to revoke the Proclamation under sec. 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, he would welcome his assistance in forming a Ministry. Sir Nazimuddin has accepted the Governor's invitation".

Sir Nazimuddin invited the Hindus to help him to form a representative and strong Ministry.

The Hindu Nationalist Party in the Bengal Legislature, at a meeting under the presidency of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, passed a resolution, which stated inter alia : "The party.....regrets to find that the Muslim League party declines to work with Muslim groups who do not belong to the Muslim League although such groups are willing to join an all-party Ministry on the basis of an agreed programme. This party consider such an attitude to be inconsistent with the welfare of the province at this critical juncture and with the declared policy of H. E. the Governor."

The Bengal Board for Anglo-Indian and European Education, agreed that the Central Advisory Committee should be asked to consider the establishment of institutions on an all India basis for the education of deaf and dumb, blind and mentally defective Anglo-Indian & European children.

- 14th. In exercise of the powers assumed by him under Sec. 93, of the Government of India Act, 1935, H. E. the Governor of Bengal prepared the Bengal Finance Bill, 1943, and gave his assent to it.
- 15th. The Secretary of State for India said in the House of Commons : "Sabotage on railways in India is still in progress, 61 such cases were reported during the last three months—28 in January, 16 in February and 17 in March. All except four were minor attempts at interference with the track or railway property."

The Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes met in New Delhi under the chairmanship of the Jam Sahib, Chancellor, Chamber of Princes. Other members present at the meeting included the Rulers of Faridkot, Khairagarh, Maihar, Nabha.

Madam Chiang Kai-Shek, replying to a press question in New York, asserted that Pundit Nehru should be freed to throw India's released political weight into the United Nation's cause, because he was a man with a world vision.

- 16th. The Union Assembly (S. Africa), by 3 votes to 31, rejected Dr. Malan's (Leader of the Opposition) amendment to refer the Indian Restriction Bill to a select committee. The motion for the second reading of the Bill was carried, the opposition voting with the Government.

Swami Bhawani Dayal Saugadi and Mr. Mohamed Ahmad Jadwat, representatives of the Natal Indian Congress, issued a statement to the press, on the debate on the 2nd. reading of the Pegging Bill in the South African Parliament taking strong exception to some of the statements made therein by Field Marshal Smuts, Mr. Lawrence, and other Union Cabinet Ministers.

- 17th. A combined deputation of the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society and the Indian Language Newspapers Society met representatives of the Commerce Department and discussed with them the question of newsprint control and the methods by which newspapers can secure the delivery of the newsprint against ration cards.

Mr. R. W. Mellor, Chairman, in his speech at the annual meeting of the Indian Paper Makers' Association in Calcutta. after reviewing the problems that

confronted paper mills during the past year, welcomed the Government decision to release 30 p. c. of the total production of paper for civil consumption.

The Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses in a joint letter to the Minister of Interior, Mr. H. G. Lawrence, described as entirely groundless the allegation made in the Indian Bill Debate that advantage had been taken of the situation by a few wealthy Indians of Natal and Transvaal to make themselves snug.

18th. A meeting of the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society was held in New Delhi with Mr. Devadas Gandhi, president, in the chair.

19th. The Natal Indian Association appealed to all Churches in South Africa to stand by the Indians in opposition to the Asiatic Bill.—“The duty of the Churches,” the appeal stated, “is clear—that of condemning the Bill and asking the Union Government to postpone it and seeking a solution on mutual understanding and on consultative lines.”

The (Capetown) Assembly went into committee on the Indian Bill when Mr. C. R. Swart (Nationalist Party) moved that the “pegging” provisions be applied to the whole of Natal.

20th. The Indian Restriction Bill passed the committee stage in the Union Assembly (Natal) with only minor textual alterations.

Khan Bahadur G. A. Dosani, discussing the food situation in his presidential address at the annual meeting of the Muslim Chamber of Commerce, in Calcutta, regretted that despite the warning given on behalf of the public and responsible commercial bodies, the India Government had not realized in time the seriousness of the problem.

21st. When the debate on the Indian Restriction Bill was resumed during the committee stage of the Union Assembly, (Capetown), further amendments tabled by Mr. Swart and Mr. Molteno were rejected. A clause prolonging the restrictions of Asiatics' trading rights in Transvaal imposed in 1939 was approved.

22nd. The Federal Court held “that the Defence of India Rule 26, in its present form, went beyond the powers which the Legislature had thought fit to confer on the Central Government and was for that reason invalid.”

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Leader of the Progressive Assembly Party and Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed, Leader of the Krishak Proja Parliamentary Party (Bengal) emphasised in a telegram addressed to H. E. the Viceroy, that any cabinet formed on the basis of the “exclusion of particular groups for the purpose of penalising them for their political opinions will lead to unprecedented trouble in Bengal and will considerably hamper war efforts.”

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, told a questioner in the House of Commons that he had no statement to make concerning the Indian legislation in S. Africa.

The Bill to restrict purchase of land by Indians in Natal and the Transvaal passed its third reading in the South African Assembly.

23rd. The Vice-President of the Natal Indian Association, Mr. Sorabjee Rustomji stated that delegates of his Association met Field-Marshal Smuts and appealed to him as leader of the Government not to proceed with the Pegging Bill, but to solve the question on a non-statutory basis which would be acceptable to Indians.

24th. The Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri addressing a meeting at Mysapore, uttered a note of warning that the colour prejudice in South Africa was a portent which, if unheeded, would spell disaster to future world peace. Sir Alladi Krishna Swami Aiyar presided.

Mr. Shamsuddin, ex-Minister (Bengal), as President of the seventh annual session of the All-Bengal Krishak Proja Conference at Faridpur, expressed the hope that in the near future the workers and peasants of Bengal, under the guidance of an able leader, would capture the provincial legislature.

A new Ministry was formed in Bengal with Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin as Chief Minister. The Ministers, of whom seven were Muslims and six Hindus, took their oaths of office.

24th. General Smuts declared emphatically that “the Union Government was determined to proceed with the Indian Bill and “place it on Statute”, stated Mr. Sorabjee Rustomji, Vice-President of the Natal Indian Association.

“The Governor of Bengal revoked with the concurrence of the Governor-General, the proclamation bringing into force in Bengal the provisions of sec.

93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, which was issued on March 31st, 1943."—It was announced in a proclamation by H. E. the Governor.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in the course of his address to the annual session of the Muslim League in New Delhi, said that nobody would welcome it more than himself if Mr. Gandhi was really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League and that would be the greatest day both for Hindus and Muslims. He then proceeded to explain the nature of the Government under Pakistan and deprecated all loose talk about Federation.

25th. The open session of the All-India Muslim League met in New Delhi.—

The House after expressing sorrow at the death of Sir Abdoolah Haroon and Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, unanimously adopted Mr. Z. L. Lari's resolution on the Anti-Asiatic Bill, which stated inter alia : The League strongly condemns the Bill and makes it clear that if the Bill is assented to by the Crown it will lead to the gravest breach between the Indians and South Africans and will go to sap the foundations of the future of the Commonwealth of Nations. The League urges the Government of India to intervene in the matter immediately and calls upon the Union Government to refrain from enforcing the Bill."

At a meeting of the Delhi Provincial Council of Women in New Delhi, resolutions were passed welcoming the Bills recommended by the Rau Committee as a beginning in the right direction and accepting its broad principles.

The annual meeting of the Ramkrishna Mission was held at Belur. The report of the activities of the Mission in 1942 stated that there were 66 Math Centres and 66 Mission Centres in India and Abroad working in close collaboration with the Mission. These Centres continued permanent activities of various types. The total income during the year was Rs. 18,19,757—11—3 and expenditure Rs. 16,82,475—7—2.

Dr. R. A. Ameson, in his presidential address at the All-India Medical Conference at Patna, criticized the I.M.S., which he described as an anachronism, and pleaded for its abolition.

26th. The All-India Muslim League at its last day's sitting in New Delhi adopted a resolution empowering the President, Mr. Jinnah, to take till the next session of the League every step he might consider necessary to further the objects of the Muslim League.

The fourth annual session of the All-India States Muslim League was held in New Delhi, under the presidentship of Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung.

Muslim women reaffirmed their faith in Pakistan and assured Mr. Jinnah of their full support at a meeting of the Women's Branch of the All-India Muslim League (New Delhi). Lady Haroon, the President, was in the chair.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Working President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, in a Press statement, said : "The Governor of Bengal has ceased to enjoy the confidence of the people. He is not the type of administrator in whose hands the destinies of the people can rest at a time when the enemy is knocking at the gate. It is the constitutional right of the people of Bengal to demand that he should vacate his office and retire to his own country."

Mr. Zahir-ud-din, President of the eighth session of the All-India Momin Conference, which commenced in New Delhi, observed : "The solution of the Indian problem should be the first care of the United Nations. Prestige may dilate, but statesmanship demands that the old notions must be discarded and a fresh attempt made to gratify the national aspirations of India."

27th. The following press communique was issued from New Delhi : "The Legislation introduced in South Africa by the Union Government to extend the so-called interim Act in the Transvaal for a further period of three years and to apply similar provisions to Natal has now passed all its stages. The Government of India cannot but regard this news with profound regret and concern."

In connection with the proposal for the exchange of research students between India and China, the Calcutta University, in response to an invitation by Mr. John Sargent, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, forwarded to him five names for post-graduate research scholarships in China.

28th. An Ordinance validating the action already taken under the D.I. Rule 26 and amending the D.I. Act was published in New Delhi.

In a resolution passed by the All-India Momin Conference in New Delhi, the

claim that it represented the 4½ crores of Momins and no other party or organization had any right to represent them was advanced.

Mr. Jinnah's speech and the proceedings of the League session were criticized by the Working Committee of the All-India Nationalist League. Mr. Jāmnadas Mehta presided.

On the conclusion of their two months' tour of India the Chinese Educational and Cultural Mission, led by Dr. Yu-hsiu-Ku, met representatives of the Calcutta Press at a conference at the Great Eastern Hotel (Calcutta), when in a farewell message, Dr. Ku thanked the Government and the people of India for their welcome and hospitality.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, addressing a public meeting in Lahore, declared : "The Muslim League wanted to co-operate with the Hindus on the basis of Pakistan, but the Hindus were not willing to vivisect their Motherland."—Bhai Paramanand presided.

30th. Mr. Syed Budrudduja, an independent Muslim, was elected Mayor of Calcutta defeating Mr. M.A.A. Ispahani, the Muslim League party nominee by 42 votes to 37.

May 1943

His Majesty the King approved the appointments of Sir Mohammad Azizul Haque, C.I.E., Dr. N. B. Khare, M.L.A. and Sir Asoka Kumar Roy, Advocate-General, Bengal to the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, said : "Steps have already been taken in India to remedy the situation created by the judgment of the Federal Court. An Ordinance was promulgated by the Governor-General on April 28."

The birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated by a number of literary societies and associations in Calcutta and its suburbs.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, suggested the formation of a labour party in India whose object should be the formation of a labour Government in India.

Mr. Allah Bux, ex-Premier and President of the All-India Azad Muslim Conference, was shot dead at Shikarpur.

The demand for the establishment of responsible Government in Kashmir was made by a deputation of the Muslim Conference.

Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin made an appeal to Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and particularly the Hindu public to co-operate with him in the work of the Bengal Ministry.

It was announced that the Government of India decided to remove all restrictions on the free trading of all foodgrains and their products in Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the Eastern States.

H. E. the Governor of Bengal declared May 21 to be a public holiday to celebrate the victory of the Allied Forces in N. Africa.

Sir Nil Ratan Sircar died at Giridih.

Mr. Amery, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, said : "The total number of people imprisoned for offences in connection with the Congress campaign in India up to March 15 is 34,895, while 11,623 have been subject to detainment."

H. E. the Governor-General extended the life of the Council of State and the Central Legislative Assembly for a further period of one year from Oct. 1, 1943.

The Government of India refused to forward a letter written by Mahatma Gandhi to Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit was arrested in Allahabad, under sec. 129 of the D. I. Rules.

Mr. Amery stated in the House of Commons that the Government of India had no intention of staging the trial of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders.

The first conference of the Communist Party of India was held in Bombay. It stated in a resolution: "India's fate and freedom is indissolubly linked with the fight for world freedom."

His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir appointed Rai Bahadur Justice Ganganath as President of the State Assembly in addition to his duties as Chief Justice of the State High Court.

- 1st. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, in his presidential address at the Bengal Provincial Hindu Conference, said: "A division of India is no solution of India's communal problem. Financially it is unworkable, economically it is disastrous, and politically it is ruinous for India as a whole. There can be no compromise on the issue."

A Punjab Government Press Note said: "It is not the intention of the Government of India to attempt to control the prices of foodgrains in primary markets as attempted last year in the case of wheat."

14 demands by the workers were enumerated by Dr. Charu Chandra Banerjee presiding over the 26th. session of the All-India Trade Union Congress at Nagpur.

- 2nd. A Communique stated: "His Majesty the King approved the appointments of Sir Mohammad Azizul Haque, C. I. E., Dr. N. B. Khare, M.L.A. and Sir Asoka Kumar Roy, Advocate General, Bengal, to the Executive Council of the Governor General of India."

A Press Communique said that the Governor-General appointed Mr. Justice T. Ameer Ali of the Calcutta High Court to perform the duties of the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court during the absence on leave of Sir Harold Derbyshire from May 3 to 28.

The Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference concluded at Lyallpur. The main resolution, moved by Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna and adopted by the conference, opposed any scheme for the partition of India and expressed the determination of Punjab Hindus to oppose any such move.

- 3rd. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, commenting on Press reactions to the League session, said: "The position of the Muslim League is one of realism and I am surprised that newspapers in Britain should have indulged in hackneyed phrases such as "party tactics" and 'playing to the gallery.'

The All-India Trade Union Congress, which concluded its session at Nagpur, rejected two resolutions on the political situation, one sponsored by Communists and the other by Nationalists. Both resolutions protested against the continued detention of Mahatma Gandhi and the leaders, and condemned the Government's decision not to allow interviews with Mahatma Gandhi.

- 4th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, was asked in the House of Commons for a statements on the action following the Indian Federal Court's judgment regarding internees under Rule 26 of D. I. Rules.—Mr. Amery in a writtem reply said: "Steps have already been taken in India to remedy the situation created by the judgment of the Federal Court. An Ordinance was promulgated by the Governor-General on April 28, taking the necessary powers to cover D. I. Rule 26 and validating all orders previously made under the Rule."

- 5th. Mr. W. G. Cove, the Welsh Labour M. P., wrote in the "*Daily Herald*": "I have read extensively the statements of Mr. Gandhi and the Indian Congress and I have found no evidence in them which brackets Mr. Gandhi and Congress leaders with the self-avowed and virile imperialism of Mr. Amery. The Congress is more ready to come into a world organization in which sovereignty is subservient to international control than is Mr Amery."

6th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, being asked in the House of Commons if, in view of the events in India, he would take an opportunity of endeavouring to bring all parties there into negotiations with H. M's. Government, said : "I regret there have not been any recent developments that would hold out prospects of such negotiations leading to any fruitful results."— Asked, if in view of the gravity of the issues involved, the time had not been reached when the Government of India might take a more constructive line, he replied : "I am considering these problems all the time."

Replying to a question as to whether Pandit Jawhar Lal Nehru had been transferred from India or had been completely isolated from other Congress leaders, Mr. Amery said that the Pandit was under detention in India and was in the company of other members of the Congress Working Committee. He was permitted to correspond with members of his family on domestic matters.

7th. Dr. N. B. Khare assumed charge of his office as Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in charge of Indians Overseas.

8th. The Working Committee of the Agra Provincial Hindu Sabha, at a meeting held at Cawnpore, stated in a resolution that the attitude of the Mahasabha particularly in regard to the fast of Mahatma Gandhi and in asking Sir J. P. Srivastava not to resign had caused disappointment and discontent among the Hindus. The resolution demanded immediate revision of the Mahasabha's policy and programme and suggested that it should deal with the situation with firmness and all practical means to achieve independence.

Mr. Hakim Abdul Jalil Nadir, the Frontier Muslim leader, in a statement to the Press in Peshwar, urged Sir George Cunningham not to follow the examples of the Governors of Sind and Bengal in the matter of forming a Ministry for the Frontier Province.

Sir Sultan Ahmed, Member for Information and Broadcasting, decided to set up a Publicity Advisory Board consisting of officials and non-officials to meet at regular intervals.

9th. The birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated by a number of literary societies and associations in Calcutta and suburbs. Celebrations generally took the form of meetings at which speakers recalled Tagore's services to literature and humanity. It was emphasized that Tagore's philosophy had a universal appeal and that his works would continue to inspire his countrymen.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, addressing a public meeting convened by the Scheduled Class Federation in Bombay, asserted that Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress High Command had displayed "utter political bankruptcy."

10th. At the half-yearly meeting of the All-India Women's Conference, in Calcutta, the Hindu Women's Intestate Succession Bill and the food problem were discussed. Mrs. Indira Devi presided.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, speaking at a party in Bombay, suggested the formation of an Indian labour party whose object should be the establishment of a labour Government in India.

The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, in a resolution that Mr. Jinnah's invitation to Mr. Gandhi and the Congress to write to him was suggestive of expectation of a favourable response "from quarters ready to agree to a cent per cent transfer of power to the League."

11th. The resignation of Mr. T. C. Goswami and Mr. B. P. Pain (Members of the Bengal Cabinet) and four others from the Bengal non-official Congress Parliamentary Party was accepted by the Party at its meeting at the house of Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, its Deputy Leader.

12th. The Government of Bengal promulgated a Statutory Order called the Bengal Residential and Catering Establishments Food and Fuel Enquiries Order, 1943, to ascertain the food and fuel requirements of residential and catering establishments.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, in the course of an interview in Bombay, suggested a solution of the political deadlock. He said : "The Pakistan issue must now be regarded as a preliminary issue. No steps can be taken for the framing of a constitution for India unless the preliminary issue is settled one way or the other."

- 13th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, was questioned in the House of Commons regarding Mr. Jinnah's speech "appealing for joint Hindu Muslim action in antagonism to the British Government" and whether Mr. Jinnah's internment was contemplated.—Mr. Amery said: "We are agreed that a lasting solution of the Hindu-Muslim question is indispensable to India's constitutional advance. Reports of Mr. Jinnah's speech do not, however, indicate that in stressing the need for unity he outlined any specific solution likely to be acceptable to Hindu opinion. In any case, he did not associate himself with the kind of subversive activity for which it became necessary to intern Congress Party leaders. On the contrary, in the same speech he is reported to have said in reference to them: "If it had been our Government, I would have put these people in goal in order to prevent a powerful organisation from letting lose in an anti-war campaign." The last part of the question, therefore, does not arise."
- 14th. It was officially learnt in Karachi that Mr. Allah Bux, ex-Premier and President of the All-India Azad Muslim Conference, was shot dead at Shikarpur. The demand for establishment of responsible government in Kashmir was made by a deputation of the Muslim Conference headed by Mir Waiz Yousaf Shah, which waited on Sir Maharaj Singh, Prime Minister, Kashmir. The deputations placed before him the grievances of Muslims laying special stress on the repeal of the Arms Act and the Cow Slaughter Act and inadequate representation in the Services.
- 15th. At a meeting of the Working Committee of the Lyallpur Hindu Sabha, the situation created by the refusal of the Punjab Hindu Sabha to delegate powers to the Committee of five, appointed by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, President, Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference, was discussed.
- 16th. Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin made a restatement of the policy and programme of the New Bengal Ministry and an appeal to Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, leader of the Hindu Community, and particularly the Hindu public, to work with the Ministry.
Malik Barkat Ali, M.L.A., (Punjab) a former member of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League hailed Dr. Ambedkar's proposed solution of Indian political situation as the "first thoughtful and constructive contribution" towards a solution of the problem created by the demand for Pakistan.
- 17th. Sir M. Azizul Haque, Commerce and Food Member, Government of India, at a Press Conference in Calcutta, announced that the Government of India decided to remove all restrictions on the free trading of all foodgrains and their products in Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the Eastern States, except in respect of two areas concerning the first and last named.
A "Gazette" Extraordinary notification said: "H. E. the Governor of Bengal has declared May 21 to be a public holiday to celebrate the victory of the Allied forces in N. Africa."
In a statement to the press in Bombay, Nawabzada Mumtaz Ali Khan said: "I hope my Hindu brethren are giving their attention to the conciliatory trend in Mr. M. A. Jinnah's speech which it deserves. It should not be denounced or ignored on the plea that he wants a settlement on his own terms. There is always give and take in any settlement, and I think Mr. Jinnah may not refuse to come to terms with the Congress considering the trend of his speech at Delhi."
The Governor of Sind issued an Ordinance granting moratorium to small landholders in the Province who had been affected by the floods and the Hur trouble. The moratorium gave the sufferers immunity from the execution of civil court decrees and co-operative loan dues.
- 18th. The death occurred at Giridih of Dr. Sir Nil Ratan Sircar, at the age of 82. Mr. Indulal Jagnik, President of the All-Gujarat Kisan Conference, in his presidential address at the session of the Conference at Tuwa (Godhra) made an appeal to the government to release Mahatma Gandhi and Congress leaders to enable them to solve the Indian deadlock.
- 19th. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, replying to Master Tara Singh, said: "Wherever a Muslim League is inevitable, Hindus and Sikhs should join it and transform it into a Coalition Ministry, if by so doing Hindu and Sikh interests would be served."

- 20th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India gave the following figures in the House of Commons : "The total number of people imprisoned for offences in connection with the Congress campaign in India up to March 15, is 34,895 while 11,623 have been subject to detainment. The number in the prison on March 1, was 23,071 and the number indefinitely detained slightly in excess of 8,000." He added that the figures did not cover the N. W. F. Province.
- 21st Sir Mohammad Saadulla, Premier of Assam, in an interview, said : "The recent Government of India order creating an Eastern Zone consisting of Bihar, Orissa, Bengal and the Surma Valley of Assam with complete freedom of trade in foodgrains has been a bolt from the blue to the Government of Assam."
- Capt. Godfrey Nicholson moved the following resolution at the Conservative Party Conference in London : "This Conference pledges its full support to H. M.'s Government in the effective recognition of their twofold responsibility towards India, namely, the fulfilment of their declared policy that India should attain as soon as possible free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth of Nations under an agreed constitution of Indian devising, and secondly, the maintenance of that ordered liberty, upon which alike depend India's contribution to the common struggle and the permanent welfare and happiness of her peoples."
- The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha met in Calcutta, under the presidentship of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, and adopted a resolution declaring that "Hindus of Bengal have no confidence in the new Ministry formed by Khwaja Siz Nazimuddin."
- 22nd. It was announced that Mr. S. Lall, I.C.S., Deputy High Commissioner for India in London, would officiate as High Commissioner with effect from May 3, till such time as the High Commissioner-designate Sir S. Ranganathan assumed charge.
- Sir Tej Bahadur, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, Sir Chunilal B. Mehta, Raja Maheswar Dyal Seth and Sir Jagadish Prasad issued a statement from New Delhi, urging the appointment of an impartial tribunal to investigate the charges made against Congress leaders in detention, or in the alternative, the release of those leaders so as to enable them to review the situation and attempt a solution of the political deadlock.
- The Natal Indian Congress announced that it had accepted the resignation of its Secretary, Mr. Hans Maghrah.
- 23rd. The first Congress of the Communist Party of India was formally inaugurated in Bombay, before a large number of workers and nearly 300 delegates from all parts of India. Mr. Bankim Mukherjee, President of the All-India Kisan Sabha, hoisted the Communist Flag.
- 24th. Dr. P. N. Banerjee, Leader and Mr. Ramratan Gupta, Joint Secretary of the Nationalist Party in the Central Assembly in a Press statement at Simla, said : "We wholeheartedly endorse the demand made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other Non-Party leaders urging the setting up of an impartial tribunal to investigate the allegations against Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders. It is our intention to raise the issue during the next session of the Central Assembly."
- 25th. A communique from New Delhi, said : "H. E. the Governor-General has decided to extend the life of the existing Council of State and Legislative Assembly for a further period of one year from Oct. 1, 1943, when the extensions effected in his orders dated June 15, 1942 will expire."
- The Commander-in-chief in India issued an appeal to individuals and institutions such as clubs for more books and papers for the use of troops serving in E-India or elsewhere.
- Mr. Bernard Shaw authorised the publication of the following statement on his behalf : "You may quote me as declaring that the imprisonment of Gandhi is the stupidest blunder the Government has let itself be landed in by its right wing incurable die-hards. It and the unpardonable flogging business associated with it have wiped out our moral case against Hitler. The King should release Gandhi unconditionally as an act of grace unconnected with policy and apologise to him for the mental defectiveness of his Cabinet. That would do what is possible to save the Indian situation."
- 26th. A communique from New Delhi stated : "The Government of India have received a request from Mr. Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him."....."In accordance with their known

policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr. Gandhi, the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed and thus gravely embarrassing India's effort at a critical time. "It rests with Mr. Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country, and until he does so the disabilities from which he suffers are of his own choice."

At the session of the Communist Party of India Conference, in Bombay, Mr. P. C. Joshi, general secretary of the Party, speaking on the passing of the August resolution by the Congress and the subsequent happenings in the country, said that by the August resolution the Congress for the first time, declared in clear and unambiguous terms that the world stood divided into two camps and that India's place was with the United Nations.

Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit was arrested under Sec. 129 of the D.I. Rules, at Allahabad.

- 27th. Mr. L. S. Amery stated in the House of Commons that the Government of India has no intention of staging the trial of Mr. Gandhi and other detained Congress leaders.

The *Times*, in an editorial wrote: "The refusal of the Government of India to allow Mr Gandhi to write to Mr. Jinnah unless Mr. Gandhi withdraws his summons to Civil disobedience illustrates painfully the nature of the deadlock in which the Constitutional issue is at present gripped."

Mr. P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, in his address to the Communist Party Congress in Bombay, expressed the hope that Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the Muslim League, would come forward and ask for the release of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Communist Party of India Convention adopted a number of resolutions sending fraternal greetings to the armies of the United Nations.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, addressing a public function in celebration of his birthday at Poona, said: "There may be many institutions, in this country, but as long as they are serving the cause of Pan-Hinduism, it makes no difference whether its name is this, or its flag is that. I assure you that the Hindu nation's progress lies in the only way that you are following".

- 28th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the A. I. Muslim League issued a statement on the Government of India Communiqué regarding Mahatma Gandhi's letter to him. He said: "The letter of Mr. Gandhi's can only be considered as a move to embroil the Muslim League with the British Government solely for the purpose of helping his (Mr. Gandhi's) release so that he might do whatever he pleased thereafter".

Mr. O. Rajagopalachari, in a statement from Madras, said *inter alia*: "The British people should realise that it is not a question of prison regulations but a crime against the people of India to refuse a meeting at this present juncture between Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah. It is not statesmanship".

- 29th. Sir Nazimuddin, Bengal Premier, stated in a Press interview in Calcutta that one of the principal object of his visit to Delhi was to discuss with competent authorities the problem of Bengal's food supply. He had had meetings, among others, with Sir Azizul Haque and Major General Wood, both of whom were very sympathetic and promised to help Bengal as far as possible in solving the problems. He also discussed other important questions affecting the Province with the Viceroy and Members of the Executive Council.

- 30th. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, in a statement, observed: "The prestige of the Muslim League would have been raised and its goal brought nearer if instead of trying to reply to a letter, which he never got, Mr. Jinnah had joined in calling a conference of all available Indian leaders to consider what should be done to overcome the muddle which Government have set up in the road to a national pact".

His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir accepted the resignation tendered by Rai Bahadur Pandit Kishan Lal Kitchlu, President of the State Assembly with effect from August 1. His Highness appointed Rai Bahadur Justice Ganga Nath as President of the State Assembly in addition to his duties as Chief Justice of the State High Court.

31st. A Press Communique from New Delhi, said : "The situation in the Hur country having improved, martial law has been withdrawn with effect from mid-night of May 31—June 1. On this date responsibility for law and order in the districts where martial law was enforced reverts to the Sind Government.

A resolution adopted at the Congress of the Communist Party in Bombay, said : "India's fate and freedom is indissolubly linked with the fight for world freedom".

JUNE 1943

The Government of India and the representatives of the cotton textile industry agreed to adopt control measures to bring down the price of cloth and yarn as also to increase production.

Mr. L. S. Amery said in the House of Commons, re : rice position in India : "The rice situation still causes anxiety and must continue to do so as long as the Burma crop is lost to us. The chief concern, at present, is for Bengal, and especially Calcutta".

Dr. N. B. Khare, Member, Executive Council, Government of India, speaking in New Delhi, advised the people to support the war effort whole-heartedly.

The Federal Court dismissed the appeal of the Bengal Government against the Calcutta High Court's judgment declaring certain provisions of the Special Court's Ordinance ultra vires.

Allama Mashriqi, leader of the Khaksars, sent a telegram to Mr. Jinnah, requesting him to see Mahatma Gandhi in jail.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar was presented with a purse of Rs. 51,000 in Bombay, on his 60th birthday.

Sir Patrick Spens, the Chief Justice of India assumed charge of his office.

Mrs. Vijay Luxmi Pandit was released unconditionally.

In the Budget Session of the Mysore Representative Assembly the Dewan-in-charge dealt with the question of political prisoners. He also referred to the food shortage and the remedies thereof.

His Majesty the King approved the award of the V. C. to Subadar Lal Bahadur Thapa, 2nd Gurkha Rifles.

The United Nations' Day was observed on the 14th June in Calcutta, Madras and other places.

The death anniversary of the late Deshabandhu C R. Das was observed on the 16th June in Calcutta and many other places.

Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell was appointed Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

Sir Claude Auchinleck was appointed Commander-in-chief of India.

Mr. B. C. Chatterjee, nationalist leader, died in Calcutta.

2 members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. Dhirendranath Mukherjee and Mr. Nishit Nath Kundu, who were being detained as security prisoners under the D. I. Rules, were released from jail, in Calcutta.

Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, High Commissioner for India in South Africa, opening the 16th session of the South African Indian Congress at Johannesburg, said : "Indians do not desire domination or supremacy in Natal.....All they insist on is equality of opportunity and abolition of the colour bar which is inconsistent with the sanctity of human rights".

1st. Kunwar Sir Jagadish Prasad, in a statement in New Delhi, said : "Mr. Jinnah's statement on the Government of India's refusal to allow Mahatma Gandhi to write to him deserves more comment than the refusal itself. Habitual bombast often lands Mr. Jinnah in awkward predicaments. In his recent oration at Delhi he tried to produce the impression that he had now attained to such a degree of power that the British Government could not risk his displeasure. He invited Mahatma Gandhi to write to him direct and announced somewhat majestically that the Government of India dare not stop the letter. The letter was written and was stopped. Mr. Jinnah, with practised agility, tries to get out of the difficulty by the cheap device of attacking the writer. He knows that he can do so with impunity as Gandhiji will not be allowed an opportunity to reply."

Addressing the Budget Session of the Mysore Representative Assembly, the President surveyed the financial position of the State and indicated the main lines of development calculated to improve the economic advancement of the State and the people.

2nd. Dr. N. B. Khare, speaking at a party in New Delhi, advised the people to support the war effort whole-heartedly as it was on the victory of the United Nations that the future of India was linked.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, in a statement criticized Mr. Jinnah's attitude with regard to Mahatma Gandhi's letter and went on to refer to the "wholly unconstitutional" manner in which, he said, Provincial Ministries were being revived.

3rd. The Government of India and representatives of the cotton textile industry agreed to adopt control measures to bring down the price of cloth and yarn as also to increase production.

The U. S. Office of War Information published a report on India's contribution to the Allied North African victories which was cited as an "outstanding example of the way in which members of the United Nations are carrying out their pledges."

Mr. Amery, answering a complaint in the House of Commons, re : rice position, said : "The latest reports from India are that the wheat just reaped is a bumper crop and that other spring crops are good. The crop is moving slowly to the market and prices are still high. The rice situation still causes anxiety and must continue to do so as long as the Burma crops is lost to us. The chief concern at present is for Bengal and especially Calcutta, where the price of rice is over eight times pre-war, though this is not true of India generally."

Malik Khizr Hyat Khan, the Premier of the Punjab, declared that the Jinnah-Sikander Pact was in full force.

4th. His Excellency the Governor of Bengal under the Defence of India Rules issued a Bengal Foodgrains Inquiries and Control Order, 1943. The Order applied to the whole of Bengal and comes into effect immediately.—Under the Order, all adults on demand by an authorised officer or committee, were to furnish full and true information of the stocks of all foodgrains in their possession and other relevant information asked for.

The Federal Court by a majority of two Judges (Sir S. Varadachariar, acting Chief Justice and Sir M. Zafurulla Khan) dismissed the Bengal Government's appeal against the Calcutta High Court's Judgment declaring certain provisions of the Special Courts Ordinance ultra vires. Mr. Justice Rowland dissented.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah said at Karachi : "Ever since the Congress resolution of 8th. August last, he had repeatedly said that the Congress decision was not a rebellion against the British Government only, but an internecine war, a declaration of war against the Muslim League and Muslim India, and that unless the Congress dropped its pistol, there was no chance of a settlement."

5th. Seventy women were signatories to an appeal that was sent to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India. They included Miss Jenine L. Adamson, M. P., Miss Sybil Thorndike and Mrs. L. Pethick Lawrence and their appeal stated : "We, the undersigned, believe that we are expressing the desire of many people in this country, in India and other parts of the world in wanting to see the deadlock between Britain and India ended now."

Sir William Patrick Spens, Chief-Justice Designate of the Federal Court of India, and lady Spens arrived in Karachi.

Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, presiding over a largely-attended public meeting in Calcutta, to consider the food situation, said that in tackling the problem the Government should seek the fullest measure of co-operation from the public, and instead of merely asking for it, should be active in creating the atmosphere in which co-operation would be possible.

Allama Mashriq, leader of the Khaksars sent the following telegram to Mr. Jinnah, from Lahore :—"Gandhi's letter to you. Meet him. It is indeed a prelude to achievement of Pakistan as well as India's independence. Your attitude towards the matter extremely disturbing. Request reconsider significance of his invitation."

A purse of Rs. 51,000 was presented to Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, at a public meeting in Bombay to celebrate the 60th. birthday of the leader.

7th. All the Special Courts in Benares automatically ceased to exist as the result of the Ordinance proclaimed by the Governor-General.

8th. Sir Patrick Spens, the new Chief Justice of India, assumed charge of his office.

9th. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, welcoming the efforts that were being made to form Ministries in various provinces, said in a statement in Bombay, that in the Hindu minority provinces, whenever a Muslim Ministry seemed inevitable, the Hindu Mahasabha should try to capture as many seats as possible in the Ministry to safeguard the interests of the Hindu minority.

In the Mysore Representative Assembly, the abnormal rise in the prices of of cloth, and the hardship it caused to the poor, figured prominently during the question hour. Mr. K. V. Anantaraman, Dewan-in-charge presided.

10th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery, opening an Exhibition of Indian Galleries in London, said : "We hope that the problems of war administration will be history before very long. The much vexed problems of Indian politics of to-day have after all arisen during the past generation, and will, without doubt, be modified beyond all recognition, before the next generation is out".

11th. Mr. M. Jinnah, President, All-India Muslim League appointed the Nawab of Mamdot in place of Sir Nazimuddin as a member of the A. I. Muslim League Defence Committee.

The Congress decided to contest the bye-elections to the Frontier Assembly and the Peshawar municipal elections.

12th. Mrs. Vijaya Lukmi Pandit was released unconditionally from the Naini Central Jail (Allahabad)

The Dewan-in-charge, in the course of his concluding remarks to the Budget session of the Mysore Representative Assembly, dealt with the question of political prisoners and detenus in the State. He also referred to the food shortage and the measures that the Government had undertaken to deal with difficulties arising out of it.

Mr. E. C. Ansorge, Adviser to the Governor of Bihar, addressing a Press Conference at Patna, said : "The Central Government have abrogated the powers which they themselves gave to the Provincial Governments under the D. I. Rules. There is now no question of whether the Provincial Governments should or should not exercise certain powers to control the export of foodgrains. They no longer possess any powers enabling them to do so".

13th. The Sind Provincial Muslim League met at Karachi, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, the Premier and all the Muslim League Ministers were present. Resolutions were passed reiterating complete confidence in the leadership of Mr. Jinnah and re-emphasising the determination of Sind Muslims to achieve Pakistan, irrespective of any sacrifices.

14th. A Press Note from New Delhi stated : 'His Majesty the King approved the award of the V. C. to Subadar Lal Bahadur Thapa, 2nd Gurkha Rifles for outstanding gallantry in Tunisia.'

In observance of the United Nations' Day, Flags of the various United Nations were flown over Government buildings, the offices of the mercantile and trade firms and other public institutions in Calcutta.

A meeting of the members of the Congress Party in the Bihar Legislature was held to consider the situation arising from the move to form a Ministry in Bihar.

"United Nations' Day" was celebrated in the Madras city under the auspices of the National War Front, H. E. Sir Arthur Hope presiding. Representatives of Fighting France, Greece, China, Norway, Denmark and Belgium participated in the celebrations.

The Government of Madras issued an order under the Defence Rules, prohibiting the possession by any person of rice and millets which would be more than his monthly requirement except under license.

- 15th. At a meeting of the Council of the Servants of India Society at Poona the release of Congress leaders was urged. In a resolution it was stated: "The Council of the Servants of India Society views with grave concern the situation created by Government's refusal to permit Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and Mr. O. Rajagopalachari and the deputation of the Delhi Leaders' Conference to interview Mahatma Gandhi in prison with a view to securing a solution of the present political stalemate.

- 16th. The significance of the life and work of Mr. C. R. Das in the light of the situation in the country was explained at a meeting held in the different parts of Calcutta on the occasion of the 18th. anniversary of his death.

The Government of India issued an order setting forth measures to control the prices, productions and sale of cotton cloth and yarn and to prevent hoarding by manufacturers and consumers. The order gave effect to the agreement concluded earlier in the month in Bombay between the Government of India and the cotton textile industry.

Sir Azizul Haque, Commerce and Food Member, Government of India received a deputation of representatives of Tata Iron and Steel Co., and Indian Cable Co. and discussed with them the food situation concerning industrial labour at Jamshedpur and neighbouring areas.

- 17th. At a meeting held in Madras, under the auspices of the Mylapore Social League, Mr. A. M. Allapichai spoke on the political deadlock.

- 18th. Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell was appointed Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

Sir Claude Auchinleck was appointed Commander-in-chief of India.

The following is the text of the announcement issued from 10, Downing Street: "The King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Field Marshal Sir Archibald Percival Wavell, G. C. B., C. M. G., M. C., A. D. C., to the Viceroy and Governor General of India in succession to the Most Honourable the Marquis of Linlithgow, P. C., K. T., G. M. S. I., G. O. M., I. E., O. B. E., D. L., T. D., who will retire in October next. His Majesty has likewise approved the appointment of Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell to succeed Lord Linlithgow as His Majesty's representative for the exercise of the functions of the Crown in its relations with Indian States.—"The King has further been pleased to approve the appointment of General Sir Claude John Eyre Auchinleck G. C. I. E., C. B., C. S. I., D. S. O., O. B. E., A. D. C., to be the Commander-in-chief, India and a member of the Governor General's Executive Council in succession to Field Marshal Wavell".

At the Labour Party Conference (London) after a speech by Mr. Reginald Sorensen, M. P. urging Government to make another offer to India or at least reopen negotiations, Mr. Arthur Greenwood persuaded the sponsors of the two resolutions to withdraw them on a pledge that the Party Executive would immediately open new discussions on the Indian policy.

- 19th. A Gazette Extraordinary issued in New Delhi, stated: "General Sir Claude Auchinleck, who has been appointed Commander-in-chief of His Majesty's forces in India, assumed charge of his office with effect from this afternoon. From that moment he becomes a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in the place vacated by Sir Archibald Wavell".

H. E. H. the Nizam's Government proposed to levy an Excess Profits Tax.

- 20th. The death occurred in Calcutta of Mr. B. C. Chatterjee, nationalist leader. He was 64.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, replying to an address presented to him by the Karachi Muslim Chamber of Commerce, said: "Unless a nation is economically well organised and powerful, it cannot progress in any sphere. The economic side is the very foundation of a nation".

21st. A resolution conveying warm greetings to the heroic Red Army and the Soviet people was passed at a meeting in Calcutta, held under the auspices of the Soviet union in celebration of the second anniversary of the Soviet-German War.

Nearly 400 buses in Calcutta and suburbs stopped plying just before noon as a result of a strike declared by the drivers and conductors protesting against "the treatment meted out to them by the Traffic Police".

22nd. Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell, the Viceroy-designate making his first public statement since his appointment to a group of British and Empire journals at the India Office said that there was certainly, no intention to set up anything in the shape of a military rule or to withdraw or weaken in any way the pledges and offers already made to India by H. M's Government.

In the Budget Session of the Mysore Legislative Council an adjournment motion given notice of by Mr. L. S. Raju, Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in the Council to "criticise the policy of the Government in not abolishing Special Criminal Courts constituted under the Special Criminal Courts Act, certain provisions of which have been declared ultra vires and unconstitutional by the Federal Court" failed to secure the necessary minimum number of votes for admission.

23rd. At a meeting of the Madras Provincial Khaksars' organisation held at Triplicane, a resolution was adopted deploring the grave political and economic situation in the country, and requesting Mr. Jinnah to see Gandhiji in jail, and seek ways and means to end the deadlock.

24th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, dealt in the House of Commons with an assertion by Mr. Sorenson (Lab) that a letter from Mr. Gandhi to the Viceroy on Sept. 23, 1942, condemning violence was omitted from the published correspondence.—Mr. Amery said : "Mr. Sorenson is under a misapprehension. The only letter received from Mr. Gandhi during September was addressed not to the Viceroy but to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India".

Two members of the Bengal Assembly, Mr. Dhirendranath Mukherjee and Mr. Nishit Nath Kundu, who were being detained as security prisoners under the D. I. Rules were released from the Presidency Jail, Calcutta.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, announced in the House of Commons : "Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell's appointment as Viceroy of India does not imply any change in His Majesty's Government's pledge policy regarding the development of Indian Self-Government".

25th. Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu had a discussion with Mr. Mohamed Padsha Sahib, President and some other members of the Madras Provincial League to explore the possibilities of a coalition Ministry in Madras.

26th. The Government of India announced their new loan programme. Two notifications were issued, one closing the Third Defence Loan (3% 1951-54) with effect from July 1, 1943 and the opening of new loans from July 3. The latter included (1) a re-issue of the 3% loan 1963-65 and (2) the Fourth Defence Loan in the form of the 3% loan, 1953-55, subscriptions to either being acceptable in cash or 4% Bonds, 1943.

H. E. the Governor of Bengal, under the D. I. Rules, issued the 'House Rent Control Order, 1943.

Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, presiding over the All-Bengal Food Conference made a strong plea for "a comprehensive plan of action to meet a rapidly deteriorating food situation and its immediate translation into practice."

In the Mysore Legislative Council, a cut motion moved by Mr. S. Narayan Rao to discuss the unsatisfactory way in which lands were being granted for growing more food, and to consider why this policy of growing more food had failed, occupied a good deal of time.

27th. The All-Bengal Food Conference concluded its deliberations in Calcutta.

Mr. M. L. Khemka, presiding over the annual meeting of the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, held in Calcutta, expressed the view that an all-parties Cabinet could only tackle the food problem successfully. He criticized the Central and Provincial Governments for the way they had handled the situation.

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, High Commissioner for India in South Africa,

opening the 16th. session of the South African Indian Congress at Johannesburg observed : "Indians do not desire domination or supremacy in Natal. They act on the policy of live and let live. All they insist on is equality of opportunity and abolition of the colour bar which is inconsistent with the sanctity of human rights."

28th. The following farewell Order of the Day to the armed forces in the India Command was issued by Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell, formerly C-in-C. :—
 "H. M. the King-Emperor has been pleased to call upon me to become Viceroy and Governor-General of India in succession to H. E. Lord Linlithgow in Oct. next. I leave, therefore, the office of C-in-C in India, but I look forward to the opportunity which has thus been given me of rendering further service to India and shall endeavour, to the utmost of my ability, to discharge faithfully my new responsibilities to the King-Emperor and to the Indian people."

The Orissa Legislative Assembly met in Cuttack to consider the food situation in the province. The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, the Premier, said that steps taken or intended to be taken for safe-guarding the interest of the people were immediate introduction of the Provincial Government's rice purchasing scheme, the removal of the obligation of the Province to export rice to Madras, Travancore and Ceylon.

29th. The South African Indian Congress concluded its deliberations at Johannesburg.

Mr. D. P. Khaitan presiding at the first Quarterly, General Meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, spoke of the food supply position in Bengal and the measures taken by the Government to tackle it.

Notes on Indian History

It has truly been said that a History of India that reveals the whole panorama of the vast millenia of her distinctive life and civilisation in its actual shape and colour and due proportion and perspective, still remains to be written. The materials for drawing such a vast outline and making such a comprehensive and connected sketch are not yet in hand. A fairly definite outline and connected sketch which gives the promise of being some day developed into what is called "scientific history" has, however, been steadily emerging out of the mist that veils the immensity of India's past—a mist which (thanks to the labours of the investigators) has perceptibly thinned without being as yet actually lifted as far as one can now make one's incursion into the age that saw the birth of Buddhism and Jainism in India in the Sixth Century B. C. Beyond that there is still only "cosmic nebulae" relieved here and there by a few stray constellations of lucidly distinct historical facts. These "nebulae" have probably a depth and density to be measured only in terms of millenia. But from the position where we can now make our historical prospecting, these vast remote dark spaces of Indian history recede and shrink and fold up and, at last, look like a far-away blank, black spherule beyond the galaxy of human remembrance.

Ancient Indian history is, apparently, "full" of such gaps and blanks. Beyond the time when Alexander the Great invaded the Punjab (326 B. C.), the galactical system of detailed and authentic Indian history does not far extend. There are too many unexplored blank spaces and unformed, chaotic nebulae beyond that time still. Beginning approximately with that period we are furnished, sometimes in abundance, with fairly trustworthy material in the shape of contemporary Greek testimony bearing on Indian history, and also, as time rolls on, with inscripational and other kinds of decipherable and dependable domestic evidence. Of course, an immense mass of "documentary" evidence and evidence in the more or less fluid, volatile state of tradition, heresay and folk-lore (written or unwritten) have always lain by the side of the historian hitherto busy with his inscriptions, plates, coins, artefacts and any corroborative evidence that may be forthcoming from outside. And that mass of ancient Indian documentary evidence and tradition has, generally, lain neglected by his side. It has been, generally, of little help to him in reconstructing, "on scientific lines", the missing skeleton of ancient Indian History. It has been, however, of great use to the comparative mythologist, philologist and anthropologist.

But even the historian who seeks to reconstruct on scientific line the missing skeleton of ancient history, whether of India or of any other country, should do well to remember that the dry bones of the skeleton he may have been able to put together will not be true, living history unless they can be made instinct with the touch of life which literature, art, tradition, 'myths', folk-lore, religious and social institutions in their earlier and later forms alone can give. From coins, plates etc., we can build a possible or even probable frame-work of chronology into which we can put our little bits of tested facts according to one possible plan or other. Such a mosaic of dates and facts (mainly relating to dynastic succession, war and conquest) is of course important as necessary ground-plan of history. But it is not the completed structure of history. It is not history as an organic process of evolution. So we have to distinguish between structural or morphological history and organic "physiological" history.

Now India has been so far poor in comparison with some other ancient countries like Egypt, Babylonia and China in her "materials" for writing the first kind of history, and the available materials, as we saw, do not carry us much beyond the time of Budha and Mahavira in the Sixth century B. C. Recently, however, a very old and, apparently, a high order of civilisation has been unearthed in the Indus Valley in the Punjab and in Sind, which according to current official beliefs, is of Summerian pattern. The buried cities now discovered bring to light not only very interesting features of a civilisation thriving in the western part of India in so remote a past (when the Indo-Aryans had not, according to the common view, yet migrated into India), but they even put into our hands interesting clues that may eventually help us to unravel many of the riddles of our Vedic and post-Vedic history. The Tantrik cult, for instance, may have older and deeper roots in the soil of India than have so far been granted or suspected. Nothing contemporaneous with or earlier than the Indus Valley civilisation has yet been unearthed in

other parts of the sub-continent. So the present trend of speculation is to regard the Indus Valley civilisation as a short wedge driven into Western India—the whole of which was still at the low level of aboriginal darkness (with the possible exception of some parts that might have risen to the Dravidian 'light' level)—probably by the races and civilisation of Sumer.

We are still in the duskland of probabilities or even less than probabilities as to the dates, origins, early habitats and earlier forms not only of the Indus Valley but also of the Dravidians and Indo-Aryan people. We do not know for certainty when and from where the Indo-Aryans came into India. The fact of Aryan immigration into India itself, though generally accepted, is still disputed. And if immigration be admitted, we have, probably, to admit not one but several successive streams of immigration. Such theory apparently called for to account for some of the critical turnings and "sudden mutations" in our ancient historical evolution, will lead to many unexplored avenues of enquiry as to ages and dates, origins and characteristics.

THE RIGVEDA

The Rigveda—the earliest and the most informing and instructive 'documentary' evidence that we possess—appears to set the stage amidst scenes which show the Aboriginal, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan factors fighting for supremacy first in the land of "Five Rivers" and in the Ganges Valley, and then gradually, beyond the Vindhya Range which with its impenetrable forest mantle, stood as a barrier between Northern India (Aryavatta) and Deccan. Gradually we find the aborigines cornered and driven to the hills and forest where their descendants, more or less Aryanised, still continue to live. In considerable parts they were also absorbed into the fold of Aryan society and culture. And in being absorbed they did not fail to impart some little part of their own character of the Aryan complex. There was not so much of racial or even linguistic fusion as of cultural assimilation. The process of Aryanisation in language, culture, etc., has been a process admitting, naturally, of different shapes and degrees, leaving at the one end aboriginal races that have almost kept aloof from Aryan influence and having at the other others that have become part and parcel of the Aryan system. The Aryanisation of the Dravidian peoples, especially in religion, culture and civilisation, has been a much more perfected process. But on the other hand the Dravidian impress on the Aryan system is also in many places, deep and unmistakable. The Dravidian is co-ordinated or even subordinated to the Aryan but not lost in the latter. This power of assimilation of alien races and cultures without losing the individuality of its own essential Type or Pattern and without at the same time making the diverse elements assimilated lose whatever is essential in them—has been a special characteristic of the Indo-Aryan race and culture-complex. This has meant organic unity or unity in diversity of a more fundamental and abiding nature than can, perhaps, be claimed for the political or national unity with which histories are commonly familiar. Historians, accordingly, commonly miss the unity which lies deep and sees only the diversity which lies on the surface. India to them is thus a veritable chaos of jarring elements of races, languages, religions, castes, sects and cultures which have never known unity before the days of the unitary political rule of the British. Of course, the introduction, in later times, of the Semitic religions—Muhammedanism and Christianity—disturbed to some extent the ages-long unity and balance of the Aryo-Dravidian culture and social system in India. But even these elements were in the process of being slowly drawn into the sphere of influence of what we may call the genius of India. In other words, a slow but sure process of cultural assimilation even of these "militant" factors was going apace. Buddhism, which had risen as a "revolt" against orthodox Hinduism—but yet as a revolt from within—and which dominated the situation in India for several centuries, ended in the land of its birth by being eventually absorbed and assimilated into the parent religion. Jainism and many other old or later "revolts" have thus "squared their accounts" with the same parent religion, and have been for many centuries living peaceably side by side with one another and with the latter.

This power of assimilation and co-ordination in which all the components make their own contributions and are permitted to live side by side as members of a commonwealth of cultures, has been the secret of the wonderful resisting and staying power of the Indian culture-complex against such disintegrating forces as have smashed up many an old and glorious civilisation of the world. And it can be easily shown from facts that this staying power has been in evidence not only in the realm of cultural contacts and impacts but also in that of social and political

ones. There have been many raids into India and invasions before and after Christ, but it is a travesty of facts to imagine that Indian resistance has always been weak and short-lived and that such invasions are typically like the raids of Mahmud of Gazni which even swept away Indian armies and kingdoms like cobweb or a house of cards. Before her final subjugation by the Mahammadan Power—and the final subjugation of the whole of India was anything like an accomplished fact only for a time during the reign of the great Mogul Emperors—India had been, it should be borne in mind, a mighty Power and a Model of civilisation and culture for at least three thousand years. And it should be remembered further that when the British in India turned from trade to conquest (always with native help and alliance) they had to settle their accounts not only with Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan in the South but mainly the Maharatta and Sikh Powers which had risen on the ruins of the Mahammadan Power in India.

UNITARY INDIAN EMPIRE

But there were and still have been other factors which, to some extent, operated against India developing a compact and coherent political and military organisation, except occasionally like, for instance, the Great Roman Empire of old or the British Empire in modern times. We possess, apparently, no connected retrospect of the remote past of which the Vedas, Epics and Puranas speak. But as far as appearances go an unitary, centralised, Indian Empire was the exception and not the rule. In later times also, an Empire like that of Asoka was not a common achievement. As we said, India has possessed deep-laid cultural and institutional unity beneath all her diversities. India has fought, and fought bravely, for the integrity of her sacred land, her sacred religion and tradition, and for their sacred visible Symbols and Embodiment. But she has rarely fought for the "State" as such or an Empire as such. The spirit of her culture did not favour the formation and consolidation of Nationalism in the sense it is commonly understood, and her basic institutions would hardly consist with many forms of centralised State control. The all-controlling and co-ordinating Principle was Dharma (the Principle of Human Values and Conduct) rather than any State agency. Each village, for example, was a self-contained commune and autonomous unit owing permanent allegiance to the reign of Dharma and only temporary allegiance to any kingship that might function for the time being. So the village communes continued to live though kingdoms after kingdoms rose and fell. They were but little affected by the accidents and exigencies of politics.

Again, the spirit of Dharma (which should not be translated as religion) has definitely and systematically favoured all human or even all-living values and tendencies and a cosmopolitan outlook, and has opposed militant aggressive, "predatory", nationalism. The old Upanishads are clear and courageous in their conception of those higher values; and the Dharmashastras (Codes laying down social and individual conduct) were bold and consistent in their execution of those ideas. Later, Buddhism and Jainism and other "reforming" movements have tended only to stress such values as non-violence and fellowship with all men and all living being. These forces operating through the ages tended to produce in the Indian classes and masses a common disposition not quite favourable to the formation and consideration of an unitary military state for purposes of offence and defence.

Of the immense back-ground of Indian History which is represented by the Vedas (Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads), the various Sutras (or Digests) Philosophies, Epics (the Ramayana and Mahabharata), Puranas and Tantras (our statement here is not anything like full), we possess (unless one is prepared to grant the claim of the Puranas recently put forth in their behalf that they do contain materials for reconstructing a fairly connected chronological history beginning with the very earliest times) very little precise and connected information for the purpose of writing a political history both copious and correct as to facts and their chronological order. But of the ideals and ideas, practices and institutions of the times we do possess a very full, informing and instructive presentation. And after all, what is real history but this? Scholars have been busy with their sketches and drawings of the ancient orders and specimens of ideas, beliefs, and practices that existed in India. But oftener than not their reviews and retrospects have been made from modern standpoints, with modern notions, criteria and standards of testing facts and appraising values. This has not enabled us in any just measure, to understand, much less appreciate, a civilisation (not confined to India but, possibly, reaching some of its greatest heights in this country) which was essentially of a different kind, and cannot therefore, be represented as only the first uncertain and timid steps taken on the

road which has through a long, long march, at last brought us to our present advanced stage. The ideology, plan and methods of that ancient civilisation we have yet not seriously studied and rightly understood. Much of that civilisation we still regard, without understanding, as consisting of "savage" magic, meaningless ritualism, "theological twaddle" and crude superstition. Side by side with all this we find, however, the highest philosophy, deepest mysticism and pure ethics. There is also much that is of original and genuine value from the point of view of human material and mundane progress. This seems to us a curious medley of what is nearly the highest and what is about the lowest. But let us pass on.

Coming to "historical" times we find that the invasion by Alexander the Great of India proves in the result to be little more than a brilliant raid. His victorious armies could only cut off a small slice of North-Western India, and this little slice the Macedonian would ingest, but could not digest. His steam-roller of conquest speedily developed "war-weariness" on the plains of the Punjab, and he had to go back only adding a bit of India to his vast Empire. He had won some of his battles in India, but it had not been an "easy walk-over" with him.

CHANDRAGUPTA AND ASOKA

After his death shortly afterwards, the vast Macedonian Empire practically went to pieces. Chandragupta, who became the king of Magadha, proved himself too powerful for the Greek invaders who had violated sanctity and integrity of the sacred Land of the Five Rivers. As the result of the formidable opposition by the armies of Chandragupta, a treaty was concluded between him and the Greek which made him the supreme, undisputed lord and sovereign of the Indian Empire. Megasthenes, who was sent by Seleucus as an ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, left a very valuable record of the times, of the customs and morals of the people, and of the administration, which though unfortunately fragmentary, bears an eloquent and admiring testimony to the high order of material and moral civilization attained by the Hindus centuries before the Christian era. And this high civilisation was evolved in India not in isolation but in commerce with other civilisations that flourished in ancient times, such as the Babylonian, Greek, Persian and Chinese. Chandragupta's son was Bindusara who was succeeded by Asoka (269-231 B. C.), who was undoubtedly, one of the greatest rulers of men holding their sway for the material and spiritual good of mankind. Numerous edicts and inscriptions record the noble and glorious achievements of his reign which, in his later stages, left the bloody path of war and conquest and devoted itself to the much more noble and fruitful task of the moral and spiritual conquest and redemption of ourselves and our fellow-being. With commendable catholicity and tolerance, not seeking to impose it upon others by his great imperial authority and power, he exercised that authority and power for the purpose of transforming Buddhism, which had been more or less a local sect in the Ganges Valley, into one of the greatest and most potent living world religions. Asoka's reign is therefore rightly held to be an epoch in the history of the world. His edicts also show the man, his ideals and his methods. But all this had not allowed or favoured the cement of the great Maurya Empire setting into the requisite hardness. Independent kingdoms like Bactria and Parthia took their rise in the border land, and the Greeks renewed their incursions. New races (the Yuen-chi) came in a surge of migration which swept all before them, and in the first century A. D. a considerable portion of the North-west India came under their influence.

GUPTA DYNASTY

Kaniska, who made Peshawar his capital, proved great as a ruler and as a patron and missionary of the Buddhist religion. Under him the Kushan Branch of the Yuen-chi reached the zenith of his power. But this power fell as another power in middle India rose—the Andhra dynasty. A peak like Amaravati or Ujjain would, some time, rise and shine in the midst of the moving vastness of Indian waters. In the beginning of the fourth century the centre of political influence in India was again shifted to Pataliputra in Magadha as the Gupta dynasty emerged into power. Samudragupta, who ruled for fifty years, and his son Chandragupta, greatly distinguished themselves not only in war but in the sphere of peaceful and fruitful administration, promoting general prosperity and giving liberal encouragement to art and literature, a glorious tribute to which was paid by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien. According to his testimony, their Empires were vast and their administration just, enlightened. Towards the end of the Fifth Century—when the White Huns from Central Asia began to pour themselves into India—the sun of the Gupta dynasty set (during whose regime, it should be noted, there had been a revival and

reconstruction of ancient Brahmanism and Brahmanical culture as evidenced especially by the literature of the Purans ; but this reviving process was, very largely, a process of quiet adaptation and peaceful assimilation.) More than a century had elapsed after the fall of the Gupta dynasty before there rose another great and enlightened monarch who could emulate with no mean success the greatest of the Indian rulers in historical time—Asoka. Emperor Harsha, who consolidated his authority practically over the whole of Northern India in the beginning of the seventh century, was famous equally for his great prowess, his high intellectual attainments and for the broad catholicity of his religious outlook. An account of his times has been left by a Chinese, Huen Tsang by name. In that, India is still painted in generally bright and even glowing colours.

MEDIAEVAL INDIA

After the death of Harsha, and gradually with the emergence of India into what may be called the mediæval period, the conditions which had made the political unification of India sometimes possible in the past, nearly disappeared, and India was thrown into a state of political confusion and chaos in which petty kingdoms rose like mushrooms and constant internecine strife prevailed. Some outstanding figures like Vikramaditya would occasionally appear on the stage ; but such events were few and far between. In the South of India was being enacted a very interesting but involved drama in which the Andhras, Ballavas, Chalukyas and Cholas were the principal actors. Kashmere in the North, Kanauj in the Doab and Bengal in the east were also alive with many vivid and vital scenes and events of political, cultural and social interests. But we shall not try to make a review of them here. One outstanding event in the confusion and complexity of the general Indian situation which deserves notice even passing was the rise of the Rajput power upon which the mantle of the old caste Kshatriyas (the warrior and ruling caste) fell and which was the chief opposition that the waves of Mahammedan invasion coming one after another ever since the second quarter of the 7th century, had to encounter and ultimately bear down. Guzrat, Malwa, Ajmer, Kanauj and Delhi were the principal scenes of the new drama of Rajput ascendancy—a drama so full of episodes of superhuman bravery, noble heroism and sacrifice for the sacred cause of religion and liberty that they have ever since lived in human memory as models which future generations of patriots in any country might well try to emulate. Though Rajput opposition was borne down in Northern India by the end of the twelfth century, Rajput bravery and the spirit that animated it survived the crash of the Hindu Empire of Delhi and Ajmere over which Prithvi Raj, the hero, the last of the Hindu emperors, though not the last of the Hindu rulers had beld sway. Rajput bravery and Rajput love of independence were still factors to reckon with in the days of the great Moghuls—Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzab. Col. Todd and some others have narrated the story, and it constitutes one of his proudest annals in the vast archives of the Hindu glory in India. As to the conquest of Northern India by the Mahammedans, it should be noted, the great prize was not very easily or quickly won : that the first Mahammedan impact was in the seventh century shortly after the passing away of the Prophet, and a Mahammedan kingdom in Northern India came into being towards the end of the 12th. century. Even this did not mean either a complete or final subjugation of India, and there is another thing to be noted. Hindu power fell not because its resistance was weak and its bravery and heroism in the field was not backed by adequate tact, strategy and discipline in diplomacy, planning and preparation.

The centuries of the mediæval age in India were marked by a conspicuous lack of political unity and solidarity. But they were by no means unimportant and barren. It was not a "dark" Age. In the Gupta period and in the centuries before and after, a marvellous process of social, cultural and religious reconstruction was going apace. The old Vedic scheme of social economy (involving as it did the four Varnas or "caste" and the four Ashrams or "stage" of life) was being transformed through a process of adaptation, assimilation and multiplication which made society more comprehensive and at the same time more complex. The influence of Buddhism, Hellenism and that of Mongoloid races also led to adaptations and assimilations, in many important directions in the older order of Indian customs and institutions. The gradual assimilation of Buddhism itself was a phenomenon of the greatest importance. The Vedic-religion survived but it was transformed. The Puranas and Tantras renewed and gave a new expression to the Sanatana Dharma. In the domain of literature, art (both useful and fine), science and mathematics, philosophy and metaphysics these centuries were also productive of fruits that were and still are of

the greatest interest and value. Great poets like Kalidas and Bhavabhuti, and great Philosophers like Shankaracharya and Ramanuja and also other pioneers and masters in other fields formed a galaxy of men of genius and talents which showed that an age of political dis-equilibrium and confusion in India was yet not necessarily an age of cultural depression and darkness and social disruption. The soul of India could, apparently, function to its best advantage inspite of her troubled politics.

But whilst this was true for some time it could not be true for all time. Her politics at last began to tell on her constitution. We do not, however, propose to continue the story through the Mahammedan and British periods. The history of these periods is more settled and definite in features, and these are, generally, well-known. One special feature, which is not always clearly recognised and to which we should like to draw attention is this. From the twelfth century right up to the eighteenth, or even for some time later, the Hindu power of revival and regeneration, of initiation and execution, was never like dead or even dying. Independent and often powerful kingdoms like Vijayanagar in the South, those of Pratap, Shivaji and the Peshwas in the west (we do not mention some others e. g. those in Bengal) would, now and then, proudly lift their heads and challenge the authority of the great Moslem emperors. Under that authority, too, there flourished many great Hindu administrators, ministers, governors, generals and financiers. In short, during the Mahammedan era, the Hindu genius was not at its best but it was not quite decadent.

THE MAHAMMEDAN RULE

The Mahammedan conquerors, again, from Mohamed Ghorī who wrested the sceptre of the kingdom of Delhi from Prithviraj after a first unsuccessful attempt, came to India as foreigners but they did not remain here as foreigners. India was the land of their adoption. Raids like those by Chengis Khan or Nadir Shah were rare and they did not represent the normal course of events. India suffered, and sometimes badly, no doubt, from the effects of the conquering ardour and proselytising zeal of some of the Mahammedan rulers. But the great Moghuls were as much "children of the soil" as the humblest of the Hindu "heathen". And this sharing together by the Hindus and Mussalmans of a common "hearth and home" naturally tended to breed a consciousness of community of interests in both as India's offspring. There was steady assimilation of the semitic and Indo-Aryan cultures also and even a growing understanding and appreciation of one religion by the other. The religions touched and even blended with each other at their highest points—e. g., in Sufism and Vedantic mysticism. They also met and evolved a broad common "shrine" to which folk beliefs, practices and institutions would bring their united homage. Even a common dialect (Urdu or Hindusthani) was evolved between the two in Northern India which gradually blossomed into a fine literature. The patronage extended by the Mohammedan emperors to Music, Architecture etc. was also fruitful of very fine result. India's wealth attracted the trade and commerce of the whole civilised world. In fact, America or the West Indies was discovered in an attempt to discover an western route to the Indian market. British, French, Dutch and Portuguese traders all came and scrambled for market, and eventually, for political power in India. It is also worthy of note that even under the sway of such masterful monarchs as Sher Shah, Akbar or Aurangzeb, the government of the country was in the main decentralised, allowing provincial and local autonomy—down to the autonomy of the village units—to adequately function. Even petty local chiefs—like the feudal lords of the mediaeval West—never unlearned the art of fighting and governing. So it was always possible for a man of ambition and ability, like Shivaji for example, to evolve sanctions whereby he could implement his high political aspirations. It was the very large measure of local autonomy and local initiative that existed that rendered possible the rise of the Marhatta and Sikh Powers and also of the kingdoms of Hyder Ali and the Nizam in the south. And British Power in India in its rise to paramountty found its most formidable rivals or powerful allies in them.

THE BRITISH RULE

In 1599, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, some merchants of London formed an association for the purpose of trade with India, and this association was granted a royal charter of incorporation. At first this Company was purely a trading concern establishing factories in the east and west coasts of India and in Bengal and administering its affairs in the three "presidencies" which were at first independent of one another but subordinate to the Board of Directors at home. In course of time

however, chiefly with a view to preserving and consolidating its growing and extensive trade in India, in the face of the French rivalry and intrigue and the prevailing political anarchy and unrest in the land, it established military garrison of defence which soon became involved in hostilities that saddled it with territorial responsibilities. It fought some decisive battles in Madras and in Bengal, which raised a trading company to the status of a political Power in India. French intrigue failed and French rivalry practically died down in India. One of the most decisive battles fought was the battle of Plassey in 1757. The battle was won with the aid of faithful native battalions, and with the active or passive support of the generals and noblemen of the unfortunate young Nawab of Bengal. It is worthy of note that the path of British supremacy in India, and often, its influence and prestige abroad has been paved, amongst other things, with the consent, alliance and willing co-operation of the Natives of India. It was so even during the critical period of the Sepoy Mutiny, one hundred years after the battle of Plassey. It was again so during the "ordeal" of the last great War. The machinery of administration by the East India Company was from time to time modified by Acts of Parliament (1773, 1784; and the Charter Acts of 1793 and 1833). By these a Governor-General-in Council was made the supreme administrative authority in India subject to a Board of Control at home. By the last Act, the Company ceased to be a commercial concern and became a political and administrative body only. After the Sepoy Mutiny another Act was passed by which the Government of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown, and thenceforth the Governor-General, was also the Viceroy of India. The functions of the Government of India are wide and its responsibilities heavy. But its responsibilities are to the Crown and the Parliament. It has not rested on an elective popular basis. There have been legislative bodies, but its motions, resolutions and votes have not, except as regards certain matters of secondary importance under the Act of 1919, a binding effect on the Government.

India's contributions and sacrifices in the Great War were great, but "reward" that came in the shape of the Parliamentary Declaration promising her a "progressive realisation of responsible government", the stages and times of which were to be determined by the Parliament alone was not comforting to her nationalist aspirations. And the Government of India Act of 1919, which is still in actual function though it has been, apparently, broadened and amplified in some directions by a recent Parliamentary Statute, did not meet the wishes or expectations of India. By that Act dyarchy or a kind of dual responsibility was established in the provinces, where the "nation-building" subjects were "transferred" to Ministers (not responsible however to the legislature), whilst the more important subjects were "reserved." In practice the transference of certain subjects to Ministers (who were appointed by, held office under the pleasure of, and were responsible to the Governor) meant little more than a complication of the administrative machinery which became, in consequence, more cumbrous and expansive. The Central Government continued to remain unitary under the scheme. The legislative bodies, both provincial and central, were expanded with non-official majorities, but this placed little power, for construction or even for obstruction, in the hands of the popular parties. Whilst the liberals proceeded to work the scheme, the main body of nationalist forces, as represented by the Indian National Congress, would not first even look at it. But some time later, under the guidance of Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, a Swaraj Party, analogous to the present Congress Parliamentary Party, was formed which entered the legislatures, both provincial and central, in telling numbers and by its obstructionist tactics caused not a little embarrassment to those entrusted with the work of day to day administration. In some provinces it was even able to "wreck" dyarchy for a time. Generally, however, the system has worked, though not satisfactorily even according to official appreciation. We need not in particular refer to the unwelcome labours of the All-White Statutory Simon Commission, to which even the habitually co-operating liberals refused to lend their co-operation. Meanwhile the Congress ideology was becoming bolder day by day, and the Lahore session adopted a resolution setting as the goal of India complete Independence or Purna Swaraj. A campaign of civil disobedience followed to create "sanctions" under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi who has been really at the helm of Congress affairs since the early twenties. The Round Table idea was broached rather too late: but Mahatma Gandhi after concluding, what is known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, joined the Conference subsequently. The result of the deliberations of that body fell short of the Congress demand. And the Congress again withdrew its offer of co-operation. This was forced on the Congress by the way in which the British ruling classes used during the Round Table Conference discussions India's internal

differences as an excuse for the frustration of her political ambitions. The "Communal Award" of the British Premier Ramsay MacDonald that imparted a "vote value" to religious differences and social inferiorities revealed the tactics of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy. It was modified by the epic fast of Mahatma Gandhi so far as the Hindus were concerned. But in its wider ramifications, it has stimulated separatist conceits and ambitions that in course of the last ten years have created a "civil war" mentality in the country where almost every creed and class has been organizing themselves to capture political power in the name of their particularistic interests. It is well-known that Mahatma Gandhi wanted to avoid a fight so soon after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. This attitude was evidenced by the wording of his telegram to Lord Willingdon sent on the 29th. December, 1931—"whether you expect me to see you and receive guidance from you as to the course I am to pursue in advising the Congress." Lord Willingdon rejected this opportunity of cementing co-operation between Indian Nationalism and the enlightened self-interest of British Imperialism. The second Civil Disobedience Movement was the natural result which continuing for about two years—1932-'34—prepared by repression the mind of India to receive the constitutional changes made by the Act of 1935. The genesis and the long-drawn processes of shaping this machinery were informed by a spirit of arrogant imperialism, ignoring at every step Indian self-respect. The imperial Government could not accept any of the suggestions made in the Joint Memorandum of the Indian delegates nominated by itself. The arrival of "provincial autonomy" changed in no way "a relationship that rests on conquest," whose "sanction" was the physical might of Britain, to quote the words of the well-known British publicist, Mr. Brailsford.

With the passage of this Act the ruling authorities hoped that they had been able to so provide things that the men and women of India would remain satisfied with their enlarged electorates, from 70 lakhs to about 4 crores, and with the Ministries charged with the solution of "things that matter"—the problems of health, education and economic well-being with which are intimately bound up the life of the majority of the people. These problems of dirt, disease and ignorance could not be neglected any more without doing permanent injury to the body politic. The increasing recognition of this sorry state of affairs joined to the increasing resentment with the pretensions of "external authority," felt by increasing numbers of Indians, created a conflict in the mind of India that was reflected in the discussion of public affairs—a contradiction between the spoken word and the practice that sought to give it shape and form. The organization of the election campaign on behalf of the Congress was characterized by this contradiction. The purpose of sending Congress representatives to the Legislatures was declared to be to "combat" and to "end" the Act of which these were the products; the incorporation of the "Fundamental Rights" resolution (passed at the Karachi Congress, 1931), and of "Agrarian Programme" (accepted at the Lucknow Congress 1936) in the Congress Election Manifesto (22nd. August, 1936) held the promise of relief through these Legislatures of the many ills—political and economic and social—from which the people suffered. Facing the Congress Party in this battle for votes, stood the upholders of varied interests, communal and class, that under various disguises and with radical programmes on their lips tried to canalize the rising temper and the organized feeling of the country. In the election contest the Congress secured absolute majorities in five provinces—Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Berar, Behar and Orissa; it was the single largest party in four—Bombay, Bengal, Assam and the North-West Frontier Province; in the Punjab and Sind Congress members were in a minority—a negligible minority.

When their leaders were called upon by the Governors in the provinces to help him in forming the Ministries, they demanded of the Governors' assurance that use would not be made of their veto and emergency powers, and that the advice of the Ministries would not be "set aside in regard to their constitutional activities." The Governors expressed inability to divest themselves of "certain obligations" which the Parliament had imposed on them. Ensued a constitutional deadlock; the Assemblies were not called in seven provinces; "interim ministries" were appointed to "conceal" this "breakdown" of the constitutional device, said Prof Berriedale Keith. For four months the controversy waxed and waned. As the statutory period for the convening of the Assemblies drew nearer, the Government, "ultra-sensitive over questions of prestige", yielded. Congress Ministries were formed in seven provinces; in Bengal and Assam, in the Punjab and Sind coalition ministries were functioning from April, 1937; the Congress Ministries from the last week of July, 1937. The refusal of the Congress

to entertain the idea of allowing its members to enter into coalition even as the predominant partner, as it was possible in Bengal and Assam, enabled Muslim communalist Ministries to be set up in these two provinces whose activities helped to work havoc with the decencies of civilised life, to inflame the bitterness of communal feeling and waft its poison all over the country. The lowest depth of this degradation was reached when outbursts of arson and loot in the city of Dacca and the country-side within the district occurred during 1941. The device of the "Communal Award" has been working towards its logical end.

The India Act of 1935 had a federal scheme to introduce. A sort of Diarchy was contemplated, and vast areas of power in the administration were withheld from the people's representatives; the nominees of the rulers of the Indian States were given a disproportionately big representation in both the upper and lower houses of the Central Legislature. The Reserve Bank and the Federal Railway Authority were instances of the former; and the so-called States' representatives were so many "pocket-boroughs" under the command of the external authority represented by the Governor-General. These and the industrial and commercial and political "safeguards" with which the Federal Scheme bristled repelled public opinion in India. The majority of Muslim politicians were afraid of a central Government where their communalist politics will keep them in a perpetual minority and where they were not prepared to play their part in politics free from narrow appeals to creedal and class conceits and ambitions. The rulers of the Indian States were reported to be trying to press hard bargains in their negotiations over the "Instruments of Accession" both in their relation with the "Paramount Power" and in their apprehensions of the rising tide of democracy in their own States. For two years Lord Linlithgow was kept busy smoothing all this opposition with his utmost diplomacy when in September, 1939, the World War II of the 20th century burst upon the world.

India was declared a belligerent by the Governor-General without even the pretence of consultation with the Central Legislature. This was regarded as an insult to Indian self-respect; it exposed before all the world the unnatural relation that subsisted between India with her 40 crores of people and Britain with her 5; it exposed the hollowness of the slogan raised by Britain that she was being forced into the present war for the defence of democracy. The declaration was no panic measure; the ground had been prepared for it six months earlier by a new Section—Section 126A—in the Act of 1935 securing to the Central Government of India "essential powers of direction and control" over the Provincial Governments when an emergency due to war was proclaimed by the Governor-General under Section 102 of the Act. The emergency power granted by this latter Section had been given to the Central Legislature elected on a wide popular franchise, whereas the new Section empowered an irresponsible Executive with power to "give direction to a Province as to the manner in which the executive thereof is to be exercised." The majority of the Provincial Ministries raised objections to this "invasion by the Centre on the sphere of authority conferred by the Act on the Provinces." Technically the British Government might have been right. But in relations like those that subsist between India and Britain legal and constitutional correctitude does not play a helpful hand.

The actual outbreak of the war did not ease the tension between Indian Nationalism and British Imperialism. The Indian National Congress voiced almost universal Indian feeling when in a statement issued on the 14 September, 1939, it called upon the British Government to declare their "war aims in regard to Democracy and Imperialism and the New Order that it envisaged; in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present." Such a declaration, said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in a message to the *London Daily Chronicle*, will be able to "make the people of India enthusiastic for a war which was not theirs." The Congress invitation to the British Government was international in its import. Dissatisfaction with the vague generalities of British politicians that found expression even in the statements of British leaders of thought was a proof that these "war aims" needed clear statement. Other organisations of vocal Indian opinion—the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind*—the organization of Muslim divines of India, for instance—were in their statements as insistent on the clarification of Britain's war aims and their application to the peculiar conditions of India. Up to now, (1942), the British Government has not been able to satisfy any party in India, to set up a Central Government at Delhi-Simla that would enlist the self-respect and self-interest of the country on the side of this

war of continents and oceans. This failure had led to the resignation of eight of the eleven Provincial Ministries of the country—Bombay, Madras, Central Provinces & Berar, Orissa, Bihar, Assam, the United Provinces, and the North-West Frontier Province. Two of these have since been revived—Orissa and Assam—carrying on a pale imitation of "Provincial autonomy"—under the rule of the military bureaucracy in India whom this "world war" has placed in this dominant position.

Apart from this argument between Indian Nationalism and British Imperialism, the various elements in Indian composite life have not shown that unity for ends and means that would have wrested political power from unwilling hands. The "Pakistan" claim of the Muslim League demands that areas where the Muslims happen to be in a majority should be constituted in sovereign "Independent States." This claim has been recognized by opinion in India and in the wide world outside as a threat to the unity and integrity of India. Confronted by such a situation the British Government stands in anxious helplessness. Priding itself on its concern for minorities it finds itself coercing the majority at every step. Since the 8th August (1940) proposals of Lord Linlithgow for the enlargement of this Executive Council, there have been two enlargements thereof till to-day it consists of eleven Indians and four Europeans inclusive of His Excellency. This increasing "Indianization" and the "Draft Declaration" brought by Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of the British Cabinet in March, 1942, have not for divergent reasons appealed to any responsible party in India. Japan's startling success in Burma, in Malaya, in the Philippines, in the Dutch East Indies, the failure of Britain, the U. S. A. and Holland to stand up to the far-flung Japanese aggression have brought down their prestige in the market-place of world affairs. And the peoples of these areas along with those of India have reasons to be apprehensive of their future. A sense of frustration appears to be oppressing the minds of the men and women of India. It is not fear of Japanese invasion alone that is responsible for this state of things. The evacuation orders on people living in the coastal areas of the country have disturbed and disrupted their habits of life; practically no arrangements have been made on behalf of the State for life in newer places and surroundings for hundreds of thousands of men, women and children; the orgy of profiteering in the necessities of life; the incompetence of officialdom in face of these anti-social activities—all these, the latter two specially, have spread a feeling of helplessness in the country. This mentality has been affecting, however indirectly, the "war work" that was to repel the enemy and wrest victory from his grasp. Since the "Mutiny" days eighty-five years back the certainties of existence for the people of this continental country have not been so rudely shaken as during the first six months of 1942. The break-down of the machinery of civil administration in Malaya and Burma have sent more than five lakhs of refugees to India—men and women of India who had made their living in those countries. This has also added to the confusion of the times. These betokened changes for which the minds of the people had not been prepared. This unpreparedness has created difficulties both for the rulers and the ruled. The Japanese occupation of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the heart of the Bay of Bengal, the advance of Japan's hosts towards India's north-eastern borders, the hurried defence arrangements set up in the eastern districts of India—all these signs and portents confront us.

But it is not all dark. In our neighbourhood China has been showing how disappointments are to be faced. She alone has been showing for five years an unbeaten front against Japan. And the visit to India of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek in February, 1942, has been interpreted by all as bringing a message of hope to an India divided against itself and preparing herself to fight against imperialism within and aggression from without. This visit will remain a landmark in India's recent history. The United States of America has sent to India her armed forces across ten thousand miles of the waters of three oceans to sustain the cause of the United Nations. India, kept unorganized in the modern arts of war and peace, unequal to meeting the challenge of international anarchy, is thankful for such friendliness. But she is not quite happy with this arrangement. For, she remains a debtor both materially and spiritually.

As we send this volume to the Press, we have been passing through an experience of administrative incompetence and greedy exploitation by manufacturers and merchants creating conditions of famine in the country. Millions have died of hunger, of diseases that accompany and follow malnutrition. The year 1943 will be remembered for long years for this catastrophe.

India in Home Polity

For the last four years, since the outbreak of the present war in the plains of Poland, we have been prefacing our study of India's "home polity" with a discussion of events and developments in other countries which have been affecting and are being affected by events in our own country. Previous to this disaster to international relations we in India have been in the habit of looking at the doings of the competing nations of Europe with a certain amount of philosophic detachment. We did not like the betrayal of democratic ideals and principles and practices by the leading nations of Europe and America; more often than not we expressed our disapproval of these successive betrayals in accents of cynicism, in the language of a mirthless joy at the discomfiture of the great Powers of the modern world; among these happened to be Britain whose imperial tenure in our own country has embittered our minds which found a particular pleasure in her "loss of face". At the same time we could not be happy with these developments, and expressed our unhappiness in the following words in Volume II. of 1939.

"For eight years India has been watching the inexplicable weaknesses of British foreign policy; for eight years she, an original member of the League of Nations, has been witnessing leading nations of the world breaking all the conventions of this super-national organization, the last hope of peace in the modern world, the last shield of the better life that science and its triumphs promised to the men and women of the world. Britain and France were leaders of the League of Nations. But their politicians took the lead in betraying all the hopes and ambitions that sustained human life under all the strains and stresses of modern life. And, witnessing these weaknesses and betrayals, the people in India were bewildered in their thoughts and activities with reference to international developments; they also shared the universal bitterness of disappointment with things as these happened in Manchuria, Abyssinia, Austria, Czechoslovakia, where Japan, Italy and Germany had one after another extinguished the light of democracy and national self-respect in these countries."

In the background of these disappointments and the cynicism bred thereby, for more than two years we in India looked at the battles far away in Europe and Africa with, as we have said, a certain amount of philosophic detachment. No doubt we sorrowed with and for Poland in 1939; we expressed the opinion that the Pact of Soviet Russia with Germany in the last week of August, 1939, was one of the immediate causes or influences that precipitated the present war and hastened Poland's collapse; in 1940 we sorrowed with and for Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France; and in spite of our quarrel with Britain we along with the rest of the world looked with painful suspense on the issue of the "battle of Britain" when in August, 1940, Germany launched the might of her air force, the *Luftwaffe*, on the island people standing alone face to face with the victor over half of Europe. But the entry of Japan into this war on the side of the Axis Powers changed all this, disturbed our philosophic calm as Japan drove over Malaya and Burma on to our eastern frontiers and rode over the waves of the Bay of Bengal entrenching herself in the Andamans and the Nicobar islands

India's detachment from world affairs

Entry of Japan changed all this

at the centre of the Bay. In course of ninety days, with the fall of Rangoon, we were brought face to face with modern war, with total war and all that it has meant to the crores of men, women and children in China and the countries of Europe. The battles in Russia where millions of armed men have been bleeding, and owing to which millions of men, women and children have been turned out of their hearths and homes, did not change the spirit of our dreams, though increasing numbers of people in India have been lining themselves up in thought with the Soviet people. These battles were also far off. But Japanese victories in Malaya and Burma brought these nearer to our doors, at our very doors. Her threat of invasion of India in the spring of 1942 did not come off; and even as we write (in January, 1944) her land forces do not appear to have been able to penetrate inside the interior of India proper. But the measures taken by the Government in India with a view to forestall her forward march into Indian territories have brought disruption into the homes of eastern India. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children have had to leave the homes of their fathers without any arrangement being made by the State for their shelter; lakhs of boats have been ordered to be removed from the rivers, streams and creeks of Bengal, Assam and the other Bay of Bengal coastal areas, depriving lakhs of people of their means of livelihood, of an ingredient of their food. Lakhs of maunds of paddy and rice were taken out of the hands of people in pursuit of a policy of "denial" of food to the prospective Japanese invaders.

These accompaniments of modern war, of total war, and the consequent sufferings imposed on millions of men, women and children in Bengal and other provinces, revealed their true nature in 1943 when conditions of famine developed in these areas and carried away to death more than fifteen lakhs of people in course of a little over six months. Controversy has waxed loud during these months with regard to the personal and impersonal factors that have had a hand in helping create conditions that are responsible for this huge reduction in the population of one single province of India. One may feel that this controversy is useless today; has been useless always when we remember that the Secretary of State for India has felt impelled to trace this disaster to an "act of God"; when we remember that the Chief Ministers of Bengal and Assam, both devout Muslims, have felt impelled to declare that these more than ten lakhs of people have died because it was written in the Book of Fate that they would die suffering the pangs of hunger through weary days, nights and months; that they would die in the pavements, in the high streets of the City of Palaces. It may appear futile today to join in this controversy when all the arguments and all the statistics cannot recall to life a single one of the lakhs of lives lost, whether owing to an act of God or to the greed and inhumanity of men or to the policy followed by the State manned in the higher rungs by men who are not responsible to the men, women and children who have died in a society of nations called civilized. But men and women have often to act in spite of cynicism and scepticism, to say things and to do deeds so that the shame and disgrace we have been partners in and witnesses to may not recur again. It may also be true that when a world war has been raging and human life appears to have

Conditions of
famine in parts
of India

lost all value, the death of a few lakhs of people in a corner of a subject country need not excite so much attention and cause so great a controversy. For, compared to the stakes involved in the present war the death of a few lakhs is not of such importance, and the winning of the war by the "United Nations" is the one thing needful for the return of peace and plenty and abundance of life. These are valid arguments that must explain, at least partly, why the British Government in London and its subordinate branch at New Delhi-Simla, have not been able to exert themselves as the debates in the Press and on the platform, in the Assemblies and Councils in India or in the Houses of Parliament in London, would lead one to surmise. Acknowledging the validity of this line of approach to a discussion of the matter in a calm and passionless manner, the publicist in India has to record his chronicle of and put his interpretation on the doings of men whose misfortune has got them entangled in this affair of famine in Bengal, in Bombay and Madras, and in the far more widespread scarcity all over India.

In discussing this problem we have to get out of the way the suspicion that any individual or group of individuals worked towards or for this disruption in the life of millions of people with a clear view of the consequences of their actions. When the Government of Lord Linlithgow at the advice or under pressure from the Military started their "denial" policy and evacuation orders in eastern Bengal and in other provinces they could not have realized that the social life of the areas would be disrupted in the way and to the extent that it has done since those days in April-May, 1942, when these Governmental activities were ordered. This lack of foresight would be counted against them when the history of this time in India comes to be written. The full story of the personal and impersonal influences that are responsible for this famine is not known even at the time when we write these lines, though two discussions have taken place in the Central Legislature at Delhi, one in August and the other in November, 1943. The head of the Indian Administration, Lord Linlithgow, has been almost silent with regard to the long-drawn agony of the Indian people of whom he was one of the trustees, if we are to accept at its face value the theory of British imperialists of the brand of Mr. Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India. In the August session of the Central Legislature, in inaugurating it, Lord Linlithgow made reference to the conditions that had flourished under his regime and worked towards the death of millions of men, women and children; while Calcutta was holding the the mirror to the state of things prevailing over the country, His Excellency could not find his way to pay a visit to the afflicted city and province and by his personal initiative and sympathy appeal to the hopeless people, as his successor did within a few days of his assumption of office. Why Lord Linlithgow could not do so, failed to appear as a humane man in the midst of suffering people, we will perhaps never know. We are tempted to put it to the exhaustion of body and mind that seven years of Indian administration had caused in him, benumbing his finer sensibilities. This failure of the head of the Indo-British administration to fight the conditions of

famine has not been explained either by Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, or Sir Azizul Huq or Sir Jawala Prasad Srivastava, the three members of Lord Linlithgow's Executive Council who have had as Food Member to appear before the Central Legislature to justify the ways of the central bureaucracy to the conscience of the civilized world.

Writing in January of 1944 of the beginning of famine conditions in the early months of 1943, and almost reconciled to the death of

Memory of
1769-70 famine

more than fifteen lakhs of Bengalee men, women and children, we have often felt inclined to avoid this sordid story of incompetence in the higher bureaucracy, of the spirit of profiteering that seized Government departments in the provinces, and even in the Central Government, of the greed and inhumanity of the manufacturers and traders of the country. All these combined have helped produce the result, causing the disruption of the social life of the people of the coastal provinces of India. Famines are not a new phenomena in India. We are old enough to remember what happened in the areas stretching from Guzerat to the United Provinces and Central India when the death roll rose as high as two crores of people, recorded in William Digby's *Prosperous British India*. It was caused by failure of the necessary rains. But the experience through which the people of Bengal and certain other provinces have had to pass during the year 1943 were the result of human activity, of the short-sightedness of the Government and their incompetence, of the spirit of "get-rich-quick" released over the country by the Government's handling of their war orders and the purchase of their other requirements. For an identical experience Bengal has had to recall what happened to her people in the year 1769—'70, twelve years after the Battle of Plassey, almost at the threshold of British rule. Bankim Chandra's immortal novel entitled *Ananda Mutt* draws up the memory of those horrors. He was for a short while Deputy Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Revenue Department, and his official duties brought him face to face with records of the famine of that year. Failure of rains during the two preceding years prepared the ground for this disaster that carried to death one crore of people, one-third of the population of the then province of Bengal comprising a part of Behar. But men co-operated with Nature in this affair. Sir William Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal* and reports of famines in India at various times during the British period expose the human part in this famine drama. After the Orissa famine of 1868 the Government appointed a Famine Commission with Sir George Campbell as Chairman who edited certain of the records of the 1769-70 famine. In an appendix to this report appear how the interference of the Government with the normal functions of economic life led to the disaster of that year.

"In 1769-70 Government by injudicious interference forced the whole stock into the market at the commencement of the calamity. It was declared a crime to lay up stores of the precious commodity against the coming year; every one who laid in stock became a public malefactor;... his person (was) in constant danger of arrest. Grain-dealing became a dangerous occupation and at the very crisis, when the country could only be saved by a more than usually vigorous traffic, respectable men were deterred from entering or driven from the occupation. As no one was

allowed to hoard,... the salutary pressure which immediately enhanced rates would have put upon the people was not allowed to exert its full influence."

The present Food Member of the Government of India, Sir J. P. Srivastava, has been constrained to admit Government responsibility in the matter of the "difficulties of Bengal", unlike his predecessor, Sir Azizul Huq who made no mention of it in his statement made in August, 1943 to the Central Assembly. Sir J. P. Srivastava had to admit:

"..... it is true that there were certain measures dictated by military necessity in 1942, when there was real danger of invasion, and this contributed to the present difficulties of Bengal. I admit that."

The purchases for the growing army and this "denial" policy disturbed the delicate balance in the food situation in Bengal, in Orissa, Travancore, Cochin and certain other coastal areas of India. Statistics have been falling on us in profusion to prove or disprove the surplus or deficit position in food of the various tracts of the country. One can fill volumes with quoting these. We will quote one only to illustrate the position of Bengal; this can be accepted as a sample of the sudden awakening that has come upon the country with regard to the causes of the catastrophe that has overtaken our people.

"Bengal is a deficit Province in rice. Since 1901 the deficit became apparent. During the last 40 years with the rise in population there has been no rise in the production of rice.....The yield of rice in 1901 was 24 crore 56 lakh maunds. During the last 40 years the average yield in Bengal has been 20 crore 90 lakh maunds. The annual requirement for direct consumption to-day is about 29 crore maunds.....If seed reserve and indirect consumption as *chura*, *muri* etc.....are taken into consideration, the total deficit in rice requirement for Bengal amounts to approximately 6½ crore maunds per annum in a normal average year."

This quotation is taken from the statement of a non-technical person, Sri Jnananjan Neogy, Officer-in-charge of the Commercial Museum maintained by the Corporation of Calcutta and published in the pages of the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*. For 40 years the bureaucracy in Bengal has been content to let this perilous state of things continue; the *intelligentsia* whose voice public feeling and public needs has been simply watching the dangerous possibilities of the food situation of their province, because their education and upbringing have divorced them from this matter of the provision of food, and they have not known, to quote a homely Bengalee-language idiom, how many grains of paddy go to the making of a maund of rice. The needs of total war have bumped them into a cruel realization that paddy and rice are also things that required the attention of the products of our universities and can well be subjects of study and enquiry in our colleges and institutes of science. The problem of food deficit in Bengal has been denied by Sir Azizul Huq, a native of Bengal, who as Food Member of the Government of India said on May 13, 1943, "Bengal was not yet deficit in rice.....There would be substantial reduction in the price of rice within a week." This statement he could perpetrate because he had to appear as a defender of the Nazimuddin Ministry in their mishandling of the food situation in the province.

For, it is difficult to believe that Sir Azizul Huq, the author of "The Man behind the Plough", wherein he had talked of the production of his province equalling its consumption, did not know the true brief in the matter. But on the present occasion exigencies of political partisanship deflected his angle of vision. Sir Azizul had written his book basing himself on the facts gathered during his membership of the Banking Enquiry Committee.

Much later the report of the Bengal Paddy and Rice Enquiry Committee testified to the fact that Bengal was a deficit area.

**Government
Enquiry Com-
mittee's report**

Evidence led before this Committee which appeared in summary in the report testifies to this fact. Dacca produced barely 30 per cent of its paddy, importing the rest from Barisal and Sylhet. Representatives of growers of paddy in Seraiganj said that the average cultivator had "hardly sufficient produce to last him for more than six months"; for the remaining period of the year he "had to buy paddy or take paddy loans". At Kishoreganj in the district of Mymensingh it was said that 70 per cent of the cultivators were in debt; that "only about 5 per cent of the population had a surplus to sell over the year; another 20 per cent had just supply of food to last them throughout the year; and the rest had either to purchase or borrow paddy." At Krishnagar in the district of Nadia it was said that 25 per cent of the population "had no land"; "50 per cent of the population did not have sufficient supply of food to last them for more than six months in the year." At Bankura it was said that "60 per cent cannot carry on for more than six months. They have to live on paddy loans." The district magistrate of Burdwan and the chairman of the District Board "were of opinion that the district was about self-sufficient" and a "surplus" district; the Secretary of the Union Board Association was of the contrary opinion, although "it exported at the time of harvest." Maldah, according to the District Magistrate, was a "surplus" district. The sample of opinion quoted here go to show that the rulers and the ruled in Bengal have for years been content to depend on others for the essential food requirements of their province. To-day destiny has caught them on their carelessness and lack of foresight.

And this unbalance is not confined to Bengal alone, but is an all-India phenomenon. Students of social life and its dynamics have drawn attention to this danger-spot in the map of India. One of the most persistent of them is Prof. Radha Kamal Mukherjee, Head of the Department of Economics & Sociology in the University of Lucknow.

**All-India position
perilously
unbalanced**

In his pamphlet published by the Oxford University Press of India and in his booklet—*Food Planning for 400 Millions*—he has put his fingers on the spot. From a statistical examination of the question of population growth and the corresponding increase of food supply he showed how the latter just kept pace with the former. But he strikes a pessimistic note.

".....although the rate of growth of the total cropped area has just gone ahead of the rate of population increase, the area under food crops in particular has definitely lagged behind. It is true that on the whole the increase of total agricultural production has outstripped population growth, but the margin is less in the

case of aggregate food production.....This difference between the indices for population and food supply is gradually becoming narrower and this indicates a deterioration of the food position."

These are basic facts of India's economic life known to all, to the Government and to the people. The former has failed to tackle the problem. Statistics are not necessary to prove this failure. The year 1943 has written it large in history. The Commerce Member of the Government of India during the early months of this year, Mr.

Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, who combined the portfolio of Food for a little while, tried to reassure public opinion by saying that there might be a food shortage of about 4 per cent only; and this need not create the famine conditions that have burst over the country. But it would take a lot of more explaining to trace the course of the tragedy that has overtaken Bengal. Mr. Sarkar has said that somehow and somehow the people lost their "confidence" in the Government of Lord Linlithgow, and in their fear began to hoard and do all manner of tricks such as profiteering. This is the story that has been broadcasted over the world to explain the break-down of the food-front in India. In the issue of the *London Statist*, dated January 30, 1942, we find the following :

"Producers, dealers and consumers have all been hoarding grain. The process was encouraged rather than otherwise by the (Government) fixing of maximum prices, for other grains were left unregulated and wheat farmers felt resentment that their prices were controlled while others were allowed to soar. This no doubt explains why the efforts of a Government food-purchasing agency in the Punjab,.....were such a decided failure.....For a time it seems that Delhi might seek a solution by extending price control to other grains, but public confidence has been so severely shaken that this might merely have encouraged the extension of black market activities and hoarding.....".

The story of hoarding by the agriculturists in Bengal has been disproved by the extracts that we have made from the report of the Bengal Paddy and Rice Enquiry Committee. Not more than 10 per cent of the agriculturists are in a position to hold on to the produce of their fields. The report of the Banking Enquiry Committee tells the same story of the economic weakness of the vast majority of our farming population. Then, how did it become possible for the prices of food grains to soar as high as 500 to 600 percent of the peace time rate? How and why was the middleman allowed to march away with the increased prices? The attempt to control prices failed, and failed miserably. Why? We have seen it suggested in course of debates in the Central Legislature that the traders had beaten Lord Linlithgow's Government in this game of regulation of the economic life of the people. And a helpless by distrustful public has been watching with a certain amount of amusement this tug of war, as the following from the *Calcutta Statesman* go to show :

"Only heads of a very special quality can remember all the varieties of policy about rice that Bengal has seen. The Province has tried controlled prices that never controlled any one, it has seen these abolished in hope that market competition would bring stocks out of their lairs and establish a reasonable price. Now, once again control is to be tried.....A perplexed and angry public is likely, and would be wise, to wait until the plan is in working before it begins to count its blessings."

The ineffectiveness of the steps taken by the Central and Provincial Governments in face of shortage of food in the country needs no demonstration today. Why they have failed

**The plea of
"provincial
autonomy"**

we will, perhaps, never know. We know that owing to the needs of war the whole administration was dictated to by the Governor-General, advised or guided

by the Defence Services. What little of "provincial autonomy" there was in the Government of India Act of 1935 was sacrificed to the god of war. The head of the British bureaucracy has been trying to propagandize the fact all the world over that the department of food lay within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Governments, and that the Central Government in India, headed by Lord Linlithgow, could not interfere with this jurisdiction without breaking the commandments of the Government of India Act. Nobody, however, has been or could be misled by this plea. The addition of a new Section to Section 126 of the Act (Section 126A.) gives full powers to the Governor-General in the provincial field. He has on more occasion than one done violence to "provincial autonomy", disregarding the advice and protest of the provincial Council of Ministers. But when famine confronted the country, Lord Linlithgow has failed to use this power with a view to bend the provincial administrations to accept the "directives" of the Central Executive. By this weakness it has not earned the respect of the country, even of the provincial administrations. This was demonstrated in the second week of May, 1943, when the Government of India announced the "free trade" policy in the eastern regions of India to facilitate the flow of food grains from the surplus to deficit provinces. But what was the result? Let us allow Sir Azizul Huq, the Food Member at this time, to describe this experience.

"But as soon as free trade was declared in the Eastern Zone, obstructions of every kind were placed in its way. I have before me a list of over 60 cases reported from time to time and we have not yet been able to complete the investigation of these cases. But the nature of the allegations are as follows : viz., stocks purchased were requisitioned, the stocks purchased were seized, a percentage of all purchases were ordered to be surrendered, and in some cases at a much lower price than purchase price, stockists were ordered to close down godowns, traders were warned not to sell, station masters were asked to refuse wagons, carters and carriers were stopped from assisting movements, exports were banned by peremptory orders.....Among those who complained were General Managers of Railways, the Chief Mining Engineer of the Railway Board, the Price Administrator of the Indian Mining Association, the Officer-in-charge of rice supplies to aerodrome construction, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, Muslim Chamber of Commerce, Indian Chamber of Commerce, National Chamber of Commerce, and industrial concerns, not to speak of traders and purchasing agents. It is said that trade agents were arrested and prosecuted and that goods in transit were seized. Thus free trade did not function. Taking the case of one of the provinces, we had an authoritative statement that the province had at least 30 lakhs of maunds of surplus grains. This province did not take any step from January to April to purchase any rice for its own purposes at a time when the price was admittedly low. Yet, as soon as the free trade was introduced, it tried to build up a reserve stock for its own needs. We were just at the time considering the feasibility of gradually restoring free trade throughout India as the only other means of ensuring steady supply, thereby bringing down the general price level and distributing supplies commensurate with the needs of the various parts of India. But, for some time it looked as if this may possibly endanger even the partial supplies of the deficit areas....."

This rather long quotation does not give the whole story of

non-co-operation by the provincial administrations, their unwillingness to help the Central Government in its food policy. And **"Obstinacy and selfishness" of provinces** which were the Administrations that put difficulties in the way? Which of them can be convicted of "obstinacy and selfishness", to quote the words of Mr. Griffiths, a retired I. C. S. who has found in business and politics a more satisfying outlet to his energies. He quoted the "example of a great province which had during the past twelve months one million tons of rice more than its normal yield, but which nevertheless either refused or failed to send even 2,00,000 tons of the excess to help Calcutta in its time of distress." The plea of "provincial autonomy" falls to the ground when we find that the "greatest obstinacy has been shown in some of those provinces which are at present governed under Section 93", those under the Governors, administered by them with the help of "advisers." And the Government of Lord Linlithgow tolerated this obstinacy.

Even in August, 1943, Sir Azizul Huq would not name the recalcitrant provinces that had intensified the famine conditions in Bengal, while members of the Council of Ministers in the Punjab **"Profiteering" by Governments** were going about preaching to the agriculturists to withhold their stocks of food grains, and charging the Government of India with profiteering in the matter of wheat bought in the Punjab for the relief of Bengal. The Government of Sind has made a profit of about 2 crore of rupees by their food-grains transactions. Even the Government of Bengal has, according to Sir Colin Garbett, Regional Commissioner of Food Supply in the Punjab, made such a profit to the tune of about 40 lakhs of rupees. Sir Chhotu Ram, Revenue Minister of the Punjab, has tried to give the public details of this transaction. "The Punjab wheat lands at Calcutta approximately at Rs. 12-8 per maund. The Bengal Government sells it to mills at Rs. 15 per maund; allows them Rs. 4 per maund as milling charges; purchases *atta* from those very mills at Rs. 19 per maund, and sells it at Rs. 20 per maund." In explanation of this curious conduct it was said that the Bengal Government had to "send wheat and *atta* to distant stations and is building up a Stabilization Fund." The Bengal Ministry has, however, produced figures to prove that it would run a loss of Rs. 7 lakhs by these transactions. The complications created in the situation by these goings-on by the various Governments, and imitated by the traders and agriculturists, have seen the light of day during the latter half of 1943. They go to show that in hoarding and profiteering the people but followed the example set them by the higher bureaucracy in India. And it is no wonder that speculators and profiteers should have beat the examplers in their own game.

The public do not yet know all the moves of this game that have been responsible for the death of about 15 lakhs of people. This spirit of profiteering has been the breeding ground of corruption and dishonesty in all strata of society. In course of a debate in the Bengal Assembly a European member charged "persons in high places" with taking a hand in the game of profiteering. And the poison has spread so far

"Profiteering" and moral degradation

that today it is difficult to avoid suspecting all men who are concerned with business and war contracts as profiteers who by their activities have not only helped in the killing of men, women and children, but have spread a contagion of poison throughout social conduct that makes the observer of social tendencies fearful of the moral health of the people both now and in the future. There is a certain school of thought which regards these signs of moral degradation as inevitable during disturbances of human life, occasioned by wars, and by the opportunities of profiteering created by wars and scarcities. The famine of Bengal has recalled to memory how this moral degradation ran rampant in the province when the corruption of the officers of the East India Company and their native minions played drakes and ducks with the life of the people.

People in Bengal, in Orissa, in Malabar have had recent experience of the torture of these awful scenes ; they have seen before their eyes men, women and children shrivelling in body and getting deranged in mind as hunger gnawed at their entrails. Neither Muhammad Reza Khan & "Provincial Autonomy" the bureaucracy that had failed to read aright the signs of the coming storm, nor the speculators and profiteers who had cornered the food of the people could be prepared for these consequences of their actions or inactions. But we know by recalling the contributory causes of the 1769—'70 famine that the present crisis followed almost the same course. Sri Hemendra Prasad Ghosh, editor of the Bengalee-language daily—*Basumati*—by his booklet—*The Famine of 1770*—has enabled us to understand the forces that are responsible for the famine of 1943. We have seen that the responsibility for the present catastrophe is being thrown by the British bureaucracy on the Provincial Administrations. So in 1769—'70, Muhammad Reza Khan who was in charge of the finances of Bengal was made the scapegoat. Vincent Smith in trying to exculpate the East Indian Company's English servants has said : "they did not then administer the country, of which the revenue affairs were solely in charge of Muhammad Reza Khan....." Beveridge, father of the great administrator who has drawn up the "security plan" for Britain, was in the Bengal service during the last years of the 19th century ; he could not, however, wholly hide the truth. In his history he wrote :

"It would be absurd to blame Government for these natural calamities, and yet it is impossible entirely to exculpate them. The failure of the rice crop, in consequence of excessive draught, must have been foreseen ; and it was, therefore, the duty of Government, while aware that famine to some extent was inevitable, to have taken the means in their power to mitigate it by storing granaries. They appear, on the contrary, to have overlooked their duty as a Government, and to have speculated as individual merchants on the enormous profits which the foreseen calamity would enable them to realize. Before the famine reached its height, almost all the rice in the country was bought up by the servants of the Company, and when the pressure came, they found no difficulty in selling it at ten times the original cost."

Macaulay in his character-sketch of Clive could not slur over this charge. He felt difficulty in accepting its truth ; but he could not help saying that the servants of the Company had probably ventured to deal in rice and "if they dealt in rice they must certainly have gained by the scarcity." He elaborated this theme thus :

Macaulay's
verdict

"It was rumoured that the Company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice in the country ; that they had sold grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which they had bought it ; that one English functionary who, the year before, was not worth a hundred guineas, had, 'during the season of misery, remitted sixty thousand pounds to London.'"

Sir William Hunter wrote

"The whole administration was accused of dealing in grain for their private advantage. It was in vain that the Court of Directors wrote one indignant letter after another, demanding the names of the culprits. No satisfactory explanation was ever made ; and the native agents of the governing body remain to this day under the charge of carrying off the husbandmen's scanty stock at arbitrary prices, stopping and emptying boats that were importing rice from other provinces, and compelling the poor ryots to sell even the seed requisite for the next harvest. Not without reason does the Court express its suspicion that the guilty parties could be no other than persons of some rank in its own service."

Sir William
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opinion

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Warren Hastings' Opinion Warren Hastings who was an eye-witness of these happenings wrote :

"Yet I have reason to fear that the cause existed principally in a defective, if not corrupt and oppressive, administration. I am sorry to add that from Buxar to the opposite boundary I have seen nothing but traces of complete devastation in every village."

William Bolts'
judgment

William Bolts has written the most comprehensive judgment on the state of things prevailing in those days :

"The loaves and fishes are the grand, almost the sole object. The questions—how many lacs shall I put in my pocket ? or how many sons, nephews, or dependents shall I provide for, at the expense of the miserable inhabitants of the subjected dominions ?—are those which of late have been the foremost pronounced by the Chiefs of the Company on both sides of the ocean. Hence the Dominions in Asia like the distant Roman provinces, during the decline of that empire, have been abandoned as lawful prey, to every species of speculators ; in so much that many of the servants of the Company,..... have returned to England loaded with wealth ; where, entrenching themselves in borough or East-India stock influence, they have set justice at defiance, either in the cause of their country or of oppressed innocence."

The value of these extracts from the history of the past consists in this that these enable us to rightly interpret the things that we see happening in our midst and before our very eyes.

Cyclic renewals
of famine in India

The war has opened out avenues of speculation that many amongst us have embraced with hungry hands. The result might have been death stalking over million homes. Another result will be seen in the rise of the "new rich" reared on the ruins of the many million homes of human beings. Perhaps, it has ever been thus in human history ; in the manure supplied by human bones grow new crops of human beings with a new flowering of human values. And the moving hand having, writ moves on to write new chapters in our history. But contemporary recorders and interpreters cannot cultivate this philosophic view of human affairs. They are moved by feelings of pity and anger that watch the contagion of callous exploitation of human weakness and distress. In the history of famines in India at the threshold of the British period (1769—"70) we have seen the eruption of human greed and callousness ; about one hundred and seventy years later the same phenomenon has appeared. During the intervening period there have been many famines in this country

killing off a greater number of people. But on these occasions we have not read or heard of the orgy of incompetence and greed that has been characteristic of the 1943 episode. A historian of "Indian Famines" has told us that in our country "famines tend to recur in cycles of five years, and the greater ones in cycles of fifty years."

"Roughly speaking, it is towards the middle and the end of each century that the most disastrous calamities have fallen upon India. The famines of 1343-'45, 1540, 1630, 1747, and 1837 were all intense in certain districts but comparatively limited in area, and short in duration. That of 1396, which is said to have lasted twelve years, and those of 1596, 1660-'61, 1803-'04, 1896—1900 are the most fatal and the most extensive of which history make mention."

Detailed reports of these famines are not generally available. Historians have told us that during the pre-British period people used to migrate into neighbouring areas—"this being their first impulse;" the stores of grain which wise emperors of the past had maintained, and above all, the principle of mutual assistance and family support of the aged weak, were the real bulwarks in the past against the perils of destitution and the ravages of starvation. This historian—A. Loveday—has quoted from the *Dasaratha Jataka* to indicate the practice of the olden times.

"I, however, will give and enjoy,
And I will maintain my relations,
The rest I will protect;
Such is a wise man's vocation."

Famine which has been defined in the Orissa Famine Commission Report as "suffering from hunger on the part of large classes of the population" is a symptom and proof of the break-down of this healthy relationship. The old cohesiveness of Indian society has been disrupted by the onslaught of the industrial civilization and the spirit of individualism bred in and by it. The feeling that we are our brothers' keepers has grown weaker as we have progressed under modern civilization. This weakening of individual responsibility has not been recompensed by the State undertaking the duties discharged by the individual under the older social philosophy. The State in India, as we have it to-day, knows how to keep law and order; "it seldom fails in the policeman's job." But

"When it comes to the welfare of the people, it has a stern and unbending faith in *laissez faire* which is in the realm of theory the perfect expression of the indifference of the rich to the welfare of the poor."

In the present instance the State in India, both at the centre and in the provinces, has failed in its duty not because it was smitten by the philosophy of *laissez faire*, but because it was burdened with partnership in a world war in which the heart of the people was not. It had to find its recruits for the army, its workers for the innumerable war industries and countless war services. It could tap the huge body of unemployed in the country whose number ran into crores. Its propagandists on behalf of recruitment went about the country saying, that war services alone could assure food

The modern State
specializes in Law
& Order

The war & its
necessities

and raiment to the people. In Britain and the United States the millions of unemployed which "new deals" even could not fully employ were absorbed in the various war services. In India also the same thing happened; the war services drew into them the hungry and the needy. For the first time in their life these people found the *Sarker Bahadur* interested in them, in meeting their daily necessities, in looking after their cleanly habits, in caring for their health. These people and their dependants have reason to thank a world war for these amenities, for this sudden concern felt by the *Sarker Bahadur* in them. The creation of a purchasing power counted in millions for the millions of war workers has given a fictitious appearance of prosperity to the country which the famine conditions spread over the country has exposed to the view of the world. Increasing numbers of men may be going about in *khaki*, but the number of men and women who are hiding their shame in rags will exceed these in number. War earnings spread over millions of families, however, have not been able to stay the hand of the god of death. India is not the only country that finds herself dragged into war. But we have to know of a country among the belligerent countries, the "United Nations" or Axis, where millions of non-combatant men, women and children have been suffering from hunger in such numbers or where more than one and half millions of them have succumbed to death.

We have heard and read something of the sacrifices that the British have been called upon to make in the various items of their food.

<p>Conditions in Britain and in the U. S. A.</p>	<p>Three eggs during a month was a ration, we have been told; cheese and butter are not generally available; the taste of cheese has almost been forgotten, people wished that they could forget it. Black markets</p>
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flourished, where thousands of operators have made huge fortunes by trading in scarce and rationed goods. A description of this institution will give us an idea of how the British people have been faring. Cosmetic dealers, bound by no Food or Drug Acts, were selling boot polish as mascara, powdered paint as rouge; thefts of cloth recently rationed jumped 200 per cent since black market agents warmed their way into department stores; clothing merchants were busily snipping off Government labels from "utility" suits, to sell these at prices much over the controlled prices; when London dock authorities opened 50 boxes marked "razor blades", they found nothing but black soil; the blades had been dumped on the black market; because Government does not restrict the sale of "salad onions" (onions with leaves), dealers paddled enormous onions, festooned with leaves, at quadruple the ordinary price. In India these conditions, favourable to the growth of black market, have flourished unchecked. In Britain the authorities have seen to it that the basic food requirements of the people were not interfered with by human greed and human incompetence. In the United States also there have been scarcities. Extracts from U. S. papers make interesting reading in this connection. In the first week of January, 1943, the Food Administrator announced the rationing of "canned, dried and frozen fruits and vegetables"; there was no real shortage of these items, but the fighting forces and Lend-Lease will gobble up half of the year's production leaving to the ordinary U. S.

citizen, numbering about 11 crores of people, 33 lbs. per head as against the pre-war consumption of 46 lbs. The likely level for butter for the year was 17.5 lbs. per person, compared to the 20.5 lbs. that the average citizen would like to get. Even according to British standards the U.S. citizen would appear to be swimming in a sea of food plenty. Six months later, we are told that the U.S. citizen had "begun to talk of little else but food"; because of bad weather conditions, of floods and unseasonable rains, a 1,500 mile "swath", one quarter of all U.S. crop acreage, was "drenched"; some 40,00,000 acres had been flooded and knocked out of production for weeks; the "crop prospects were the poorest in three years"; wheat production was estimated "down a whopping 26% under last year"; oats, barley, rye, were all "down". In a report published in the first week of July, we read of administrative "muddle and mismanagement" being held responsible for "unnecessary shortages"—this "in the midst of geographical plenty". Envy was being expressed at the way the British have made a success of their subsidy to agriculture; their control over the distribution of food. Before the war Britain was importing more than 60 per cent of her food from outside her frontiers; today she has been able to halve these import figures. By her control of food-grains "applied from docks to the stores", Britain has been able to control the rationing of her more than four crores of people. The United States has to tackle 60,00,000 farmers. In India also the seven crores of individual farmer families have found a place in the controversy that has been raging over the food muddle in the country. But Mr. Amery and his subordinates have not been able to explain why the United States, burdened by her "60,00,000" farmers, have not had to face a famine.

This picture in contrast between Britain, the United States and India, all of them suffering for one reason or other from food shortage, tells a story the moral of which has yet to be explained. We have heard that in Britain arrangements for food control and rationing was started three years before the outbreak of this war; in the United States they began to talk of rationing after fifteen months of their joining the war. India has been as long entangled in the war as Britain herself. But her food situation was allowed to so deteriorate that about more than one and half million men, women and children died owing to lack of food during the last six months of 1943. It may well be that for years a large percentage of the people have been living on short ration, knowing not a full meal. Fifty years ago a Finance Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council made the remark that one-third of the people of India did not know from year's end to year's end the satisfaction of a full meal. Nearly fifty years later a member of the Indian Medical Service continues this doleful story." Nutrition is

"the most pressing of all present-day problems in India, as normal nutrition and health cannot be maintained on many of the diets now used by millions of the Indian people."

"Sir John Megaw estimates that 39 per cent of the population is well nourished, 41 per cent poorly nourished, and 20 per cent very badly nourished. Or, in other words, 60 per cent of the population is suffering from malnutrition."

The above quotation is from a book—*Food*—written for children—in the Foreword of which Colonel McCarrison put these words.

India's chart of health is not anything at which one can look on with complacence. It has been found that our daily average number of sick persons per 1,000 inhabitants is 84, while in New Zealand and England it is 19 and 31 respectively. Malaria is almost universally prevalent in this country ; one out of 3.5 deaths is due to this cause alone. About one-fourth of the population is victim to this disease, as estimated by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations, causing an economic loss of Rs. 33 crores every year. These are unquestioned and unquestionable facts of India's life. These may explain why scarcity of food should have affected the normally ill-nourished people in India, and they should have in their millions fallen victims to it in its earliest stage. In Britain for about 20 years, from 1918 to 1939, the number of unemployed was on an average about 15 lakhs of people, creating distress and malnutrition to about a crore of people. In the United States for about 12 years, since 1930, the number of unemployed was in the neighbourhood of 1 crore of people. These unemployed people, maintained by "doles" from the State or charitable people, could not have been physically fit, could not have been well-nourished. We have not heard that rising prices and disturbances to normal life caused by war have led anywhere near to the scenes of desolation that wide areas in India have had to witness. From a consideration of all the factors connected with food in the three countries discussed above, one is driven to the conclusion that while in Britain and in the United States the ruling classes have been careful and successful in fighting the many complications inseparable from war, in controlling and keeping down the anti-social activities of the hoarder and the profiteer, in India their opposite numbers have been unsuccessful in doing so, have been careless with the fate and fortunes of the millions of people of whom they boastfully claimed to be trustees. To what cause are to be traced this carelessness and failure ? Stories of bureaucratic ineptitude are as plentiful in Britain and in the United States as in India. One difference there is in the system of administration as it obtained in the two countries of the West as contrasted with India. In them the Government is racy of the soil ; here in India it is alien to the soil, alien in habits of thought and conduct. The individuals forming the bureaucracy in this country are many of them moved by the highest impulses of social service. But they are limbs of an organism that is rootless in the life and traditions of the country. And even with the best will in the world the most sympathetic of these administrators have not been able to do good to the people in consonance with the various schemes that litter the dovecots of the many Secretariats, either Central or Provincial. The judgment of a British weekly—*The New Statesman & Nation*—is conclusive in this matter :

"There have been and are today among the small body of British Civil Servants in India individuals who toil devotedly. It is also true that railways and roads, and in a few places, water-power have prevented the frequent famines of the past. But this is no great achievement for the bureaucracy that has lived through a century and half among this half-starved, short-lived, impoverished and illiterate population. Sometimes it would have been better if it had done nothing."

We have referred incidentally to the attempt made by the British bureaucracy both here and in Britain to throw off their own shoulders the responsibility for creating and failing to control the conditions of famine that have devastated the country. Lord Linlithgow has not been as vociferous in this game as his chief in London, Mr. Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India. The British Government with Mr. Churchill as Prime Minister has preferred to keep studiously silent over the matter. The British public, engaged in a life-and-death struggle, has also failed to bear its influence on their Government for the relief of the famine-stricken people in India. On the occasion of previous famines the City of London headed by its Lord Mayor used to initiate the Mansion House Fund for relief. On the present occasion these were absent. These symptoms of indifference will require some explaining.

An attempt has been made to make a special case of the famine so far as it related to Bengal. Sir Azizul Huq, in his apologia made to the Central Assembly in the special session held in August, 1943, tried to foist the responsibility on the Bengal Ministry that had Mr. Fazlul Huq for its Chief Minister in the early months of the year. This ministry had been formed in December, 1941, with the help of Mr. Sarat Chandra Basu, elder brother of Subhas Chandra Basu. It required great courage and self-sacrifice on the part of Mr. Basu to agree to take a hand in evolving a ministry in Bengal free from the communalism that has been characteristic of the ministries since the 1935 constitution began to work in this province. The Dacca riots have thrown light on the devious ways in which members of the Ministry belonging to the Dacca group had been accentuating communal bitterness in the province. Mr. Fazlul Huq, the Chief Minister, was of divided mind in the matter of the spirit of separatism that inspired the Muslim members of his Ministry; he was almost a prisoner in the hands of this group. The Dacca riots must have opened his eyes to the danger of the policy that certain of his Ministry had been following. This awakening must have been one of the contributory causes that had forced the resignation of Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and other inveterate members of the Muslim League. We will never know the other forces that had hastened this change. Mr. Fazlul Huq has never been happy with this separation; we know that he was anxious to make up his quarrel with the Muslim League, to wind up the Progressive Coalition Party that formed the Ministerial Party, which, to quote the words used by him in his letter of repentance to Mr. Jinnah, "existed only on paper." This letter exposed Mr. Huq's position as nothing else could have done as successfully. It showed that his majority in the Legislature was unreliable or growing unreliable. It also explained why the permanent officialdom at Writers' Building in Calcutta dared work against his Ministry, supported as it was by the Governor of the province. It also explained why he felt helpless in handling the food problem complicated as it was by the machinations of the bureaucracy referred to above. It is true that the war has killed all possibilities of good embedded in the 1935 Act; it reduced the Ministries into a useless and wasteful paraphernalia of administration.

Mr. Fazlul Huq felt more helpless when the Finance Minister in this Ministry, Dr. Syama Prosad Mukherjee, resigned, forced into this step by the way in which Lord Linlithgow had been handling the general political situation in the country. In his letters addressed to the Governor-General on various occasions, specially during the latter part of 1942, he as a Minister of the Crown made efforts to reconcile the self-respect of India with the enlightened self-interest of Britain. In his letters to the Governor of Bengal, Sir John Herbert, he pursued the same theme. In his letter of resignation sometime in the middle of November, 1942, addressed to the Governor, he did in addition expostulate with him for his invasion on the Ministerial field, for his disregard of Ministerial advice, for his activities that worked against the policy and practice of the Ministry, for his reliance on permanent officials who formed a cabal that was immune from the influence of public opinion in the country, and that preferred the interests of Britain to those of the country that fed them. In this letter Dr. Mukherjee is reported to have drawn pointed attention to what the police and the military had done in Midnapur in complete disregard of civilized methods of administration, of human considerations. Under other conditions this charge sheet would have discredited before the bar of world opinion the men and the system of Government that tolerated such "methods of barbarism". Both Lord Linlithgow and Sir John Herbert appeared to have ignored this protest and condemnation. Dr. Syama Prosad Mukherjee's letters have been banned from seeing the light of day; and replies that they might have made to these letters have shared the same fate. Sir John Herbert has left the field of his mundane activities; the public in Bengal have not had an opportunity to judge between him and the Ministers. Lord Linlithgow has left India, unsung and unwept; he and his government have failed to meet the charge-sheet that Dr. Mukherjee and others have framed against them.

We must return now to the reasons which enabled official and non-official influences to discredit the Fazlul Huq Ministry in Bengal by exploiting the food crisis in the province. Muslim League politicians were set deadly against him; his attempt to creep into the Muslim League organization must have repelled his non-Muslim supporters. Permanent officialdom was repelled by his agreeing to hold an enquiry into the stories of atrocities and frightfulness brought against the police and the military in the Bengal Legislature. The European group which held the balance of power in the Bengal Assembly naturally followed the line thrown up by the Secretariat. Sir John Herbert was consistently antagonistic to the Ministry; why he was so has not been explained. One reason may be that as the Fazlul Huq Ministry drew its strength from the nationalist, non-communal impulses and principles of the province which is synonymous with those represented by and in the Indian National Congress, the British bureaucracy, angered by the "Quit India" movement, could hardly tolerate its existence in the scheme of a State that was non-national, non-Indian. Ringed round by these antagonistic forces the wonder is that the Ministry could function for more than sixteen months. It failed to tackle the food crisis, because the complica-

Forces that brought down the Fazlul Huq Ministry

tions created by the Central bureaucracy was as unhelpful as the provincial. In course of a discussion in the Bengal Assembly held in the second week of March, 1943, raised by an Opposition motion on the supply and distribution of food stuffs, coal, kerosine and cloth, all pertaining to the daily necessities of the humblest of homes, the Minister (the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca) made complaint that all "our difficulties arose mainly from the uncertainties of Central Government policy." The Chief Minister (Mr. Fazlul Huq) who wound up this discussion struck a pessimistic note all along his speech; he spoke of circumstances "over which we had no control" more than once in course of this speech; he seemed to suggest that things had been allowed to drift to such a dangerous distance that it was beyond human agency to control and set these right. Mr. Huq was not very communicative with regard to the circumstances that had brought conditions of famine to Bengal; he had "got to see" that he did not "use any words which may lead to any apprehension in the mind of the people or cause panic". But he seemed to unburden his mind in the following words:

"I confess that I have been extremely unhappy about all that has happened concerning the Civil Supplies Department ever since the promulgation of denial policy in April, 1942.

The problems were very complicated, and various factors came into play which rendered it necessary for officials to take quick action. But there were various reasons why actions that were taken did not produce the best results. As regards the officials concerned, I gladly admit that most of them were extremely brilliant members of the Indian Civil Service, and as regards the non-officials they were men who had attained positions of eminence and dignity in the public life of this country. But it so happened that many of them not only did not actually know what they were doing and could not appreciate what the results would be of the policy they were following in consequence of their meagre knowledge of the habits and customs of the people.....In many of these cases directions came from the Centre, and so far as I can remember, many things have happened to which the Provincial Government not only give no consent but have entered firm but respectful protest."

Here are hints and suggestions of Central incompetence the details of which the public do not know. Lack of Central knowledge was never better illustrated than in the speech made in the Legislative Assembly in the middle of February, 1943, by Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker as Food Member in the Linlithgow Executive Council. In his attempt to assure the people that there was really no deficit in the food supply of the country, he said:

"The nett gap in our total supply of food grains during 1943, after taking into account the increase, our requirement would not exceed two million tons, representing a deficit of no more than 4 per cent in our total annual production of the principal food grains. In some of the years immediately preceding the war we pulled through equal or bigger shortages without feeling much strain. The carry-over from previous years might no doubt have stood us in good stead, but even after allowing for this the House would agree that the estimated deficit as such was certainly not of an order that would warrant any alarm."

The Food Member of Lord Linlithgow was speaking in this strain from a brief prepared by the Central Food Department, and that at a time when during the harvest time of the principal food crop in Bengal, rice was selling in the province at the rate of Rs. 13 to Rs. 15 per maund in the country-side and much

Its attempt at
misleading

higher in Calcutta. It is to utterances like these at which reference must have been hinted by Mr. Fazlul Huq in the speech quoted above. Mr. Sarker's successor, another Bengalee, Sir Azizul Huq, was not only as unilluminative, but he was partisan in presenting the brief on behalf of the Linlithgow Government. In order to save the face of this Government he told the story of what the representatives of the Bengal Government and of the Ministry had said at the Food Conference held in December, 1942. Mr. Fazlul Huq had attended this conference. Sir Aziz quoted him as saying : "We know rice is not enough for us. We do require some wheat from outside. We do not want to be fixed to a policy. We shall act as we may decide." As regards rice the statement on behalf of Bengal was as follows : "We do not require for the next few months any rice even though we are in deficit." Hearing these words one could echo the ejaculation uttered in the Assembly—"Happy-go-lucky" !

Mr. Fazlul Huq, however, has challenged the accuracy of this presentation of the rice position in Bengal ; he has charged Sir Aziz with tearing words from their context and omitting important reservations, and thus misrepresenting the position taken up at, this conference by the officials from the province, and by him as representing the Ministry ; he has asked Sir Aziz to get published the full speech or speeches made by him. In course of a reply Sir Aziz has made a fairly long quotation from a speech of Mr. Huq's, but this does not contain the words that would justify the position taken up by Bengal at the Food Conference. Mr. Huq, therefore, had to requisition the help of a member of the Central Assembly to explain his position. Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi came to his rescue, and in course of a speech made during the food debate held in the middle of November, 1943, when famine had already carried off a million people of Bengal, he quoted the words that put a new complexion on the whole controversy.

"We do not require for the next few months any rice even though we are in deficit, provided you do not export any rice from Bengal and provided you give us sufficient wheat for our consumption. And it is then and then alone that I shall be able to pull through for the next few months."

These conditional words justify the position taken by Bengal at this Food Conference. The suggestion of Sir Azizul Huq, if it has any meaning, seems to be that the Bengal Ministry always minimised the crisis in the food situation in Bengal, that the Government of India was not kept informed of the growing worsening of conditions in the economic life of the province. It is difficult to accept at face value this plea. Bengal forms part of the war front ; the Government justified their removal of food grains policy on this plea ; they must have known and understood the consequences of this policy and the dislocation that it would cause to the life of lakhs of people ; their activities all over the eastern provinces must have for their success the support and acquiescence of the people of these areas. It would do discredit to their intelligence if they failed to take count of these factors of the situation. Over and above these, the angry discussions in the Bengal Legislature gave voice to the premonitory rumbles of the storm that was to burst over the province's life. In April, 1942,

The Fazlul
Huq Ministry spoke
of a surplus

there was full-throated condemnation of the "denial policy" and the dire consequences that flowed from it. The procurement policy through Agencies adopted by the Central Government, and the disturbance it caused to the confidence of the people in the normal flow of trade and commerce, the helplessness of the Ministry in this matter—all these facts were ventilated. In the September (1942) session of the Bengal Assembly a non-official resolution on "Price control and supply of food-stuffs and other essential commodities" was the occasion for full discussion of this problem. The Chief Minister, Mr. Fazlul Huq, gave an "account of the various activities" of the Bengal Government during the previous six months. In the former Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee spoke on behalf of the so-called Food Minister, the Nawab of Dacca. In course of their speeches both the Chief Minister and the Finance Minister made statements that have a bearing on the value of the statistics of food-grains production in the province. We quote both these.

"In this Province the problem (the supply and price of the necessities of life) is complicated by the fact that Bengal is not self-sufficient as regards any of its food supplies except rice Even in the case of rice we have seen the difficulties of securing adequate supplies to the public at controlled prices ; the difficulties of price control are greater still when we have no control over the source of supply."—Mr. *Fazlul Huq*.

"As has been pointed out in the statement made by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister,.....that barring rice, in respect of other essential commodities, we have to depend on other parts of India....."

"With regard to rice, Sir, the figures which were supplied by the Agriculture Department for the year that is about to close go to show that Bengal would have surplus rice to the extent of 3 to 4 lakh tons which come to more than a crore maunds of rice. I know, Sir, that it will be asserted that those figures are not dependable. Obviously, I am not here saying that the figures are absolutely dependable ; but there are certain methods of calculation which have been pursued in the past, year in and year out, and more or less these figures have not proved violently incorrect. But this year, although the year is not yet out, we are faced with a problem which certainly gives an impression everywhere that there has been a shortage of rice in the Province. Now, people say that rice has not come from Burma ; that is true ; and also that there was a heavy export of rice from Bengal during the first few months of the year 1942 ; that is also true ; but taking all those into calculation we cannot help feeling that unless something has gone wrong somewhere in a manner which is not imaginable there must be surplus rice available in the Province....." Dr. *Syama Prasad Mukherjee*.

From these quotations we are led to conclude that in September, 1942, the Ministry of Mr. Fazlul Huq could be persuaded to announce

Under Central direction	that there was surplus of rice in Bengal though the upward trend in its price had already begun : it was being sold at Rs. 10 per maund, at the price that was double of the normal. Why the two Ministers
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did so, we can well imagine. They must not make statements that would add to the panic of the public, even if it required a little manipulation of the truth. We have heard it suggested that it was under Central direction that the Government of Bengal felt it to be its duty to minimise the growing intensity of the food situation in the province. The surplus position of Bengal in the matter of rice was required to be statistically proved and maintained. As a result of this policy the public has been fed with statistics while the men, women and children in wide areas in Bengal, Orissa, Travancore-Cochin, Bijapur and a few other districts in Bombay, in the districts of Cuddapah and Kurnool in Madras were dying in the midst of this plenty. The two

statements of the Bengal Ministers to which we have drawn attention have thus to be taken with the proverbial grain of salt.

We have seen how statistics have misled the country. These have not been able to satisfy hunger. And having passed through the tragic experiences of 1943, the man in the street, the man whose taxes maintain the huge administrative machinery, may feel that less of statistics and a little more of sympathy and imagination would have been more helpful during these months. We have seen members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, even those who were charged with the duty of finding the food for the people, trying to defend their position with the help of these statistics of crores of maunds of food grains being moved from surplus to deficit provinces and areas. Failure of surplus provinces to contribute to the relief of the deficit have also been sought to be statistically proved. Herein the transport arrangement of the country have come in for its share of criticism. These charges and counter-charges, a study of these, have become a torture to the mind. For these lead us nowhere. The hungry people starve and die, whether or not these be scientifically correct.

But out of these slinging of statistics one thing has come out prominently that the provinces and States of India have not co-operated in fighting the famine. Free trade in food grains was announced in the third week of May, 1943. The Provinces and States that fell within this free trade zone began to behave in a strange manner, the ruling authorities began to put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the free movement of food grains on which the life of millions in Bengal depended. The story of this shame has not found a place in the Press of the country; the public has been kept in ignorance of this. It was only when people began to die in the streets of Calcutta, and the correspondents of the world's Press had an ocular demonstration of the civilized administration of Britain in India, it was only then that the Government of India raised a part of the veil. Sir Azizul Huq was chosen to do this unpleasant work. He traced the source of the evil to many months previous to those we have been discussing. The third Price Control Conference was held in the third week of October, 1941. The representatives who attended it, some of them, showed their mind by starting to oppose the proposals for the control of agricultural prices, as that would be "only in the interests of export."

"Some of the representatives were not only against the control of prices but were in favour of a further rise in the prices of rice and opposed to any import of rice from Burma. Punjab was emphatically against any control of wheat prices and was not in favour, in any circumstances, of any control during harvest."

The full story of narrow parochialism revealed itself later and showed all its ugly features when free trade was introduced by the Central Government in the Eastern Zone—in Behar, in Assam, in Orissa and the States comprised therein, in May, 1943. There was a sudden rise in the price of food-grains in these areas causing distress and suffering to the people concerned. The ruling authorities made their protests to the Central Government; they went beyond words in bringing home to the

Statistics
&
hunger

Provinces & States
did not help Central Government

Why the Linlithgow Government tolerated this non-co-operation?

latter the unwisdom of ignoring local interests. We have already quoted from Sir Azizul Huq's speech the nature of the obstructions that they put in the way of the flow of food grains to the deficit areas. The wonder has been, why did the Government of Lord Linlithgow tolerate these practices even when it found that these threatened distress and death to millions of people? We are not impressed by the plea that "provincial autonomy" could not be touched. For we know that when the British Government or its subordinate branch in India which is the Government of India as by law established, decided to do a thing, the provincial administrations and feudatory States have had to fall into line with this "general policy"; the latter have to act according to the "directives" issued from London and carried to them through the "post office" at Delhi-Simla. The latest example of such concerted action was shown in the campaign against the "Quit India" movement. We know there were Ministries that did not like the way in which this campaign was directed. Why did the Government of Lord Linlithgow regard the food crisis as not deserving of "directives" in such tones that the subordinate administrations would recognise the master's voice in them, and hasten to act up to these? In all the laboured replies of Mr. Leopold Amery to the charge of neglect we could not detect one reason for this supineness. It would remain one of the enigmas of Anglo-Indian history.

The failure of the Linlithgow Government to tackle the food problem of the country is writ large in the famine that during the last six months of 1943 carried death to more than 10 lakhs of men, women and children in the single province of Bengal. We have seen why the Fazlul Huq Ministry that held sway in the province till the 29th. of March, 1943, failed to rise equal to the situation. The then Governor, the late Sir John Herbert, was antagonistic to it from the beginning of its career, from the second week of December, 1941, within a week of the attack by Japan on Anglo-American territories in the Pacific region. We have tried to explain above why he felt and behaved like this. Mr. Fazlul Huq and his political supporters have charged this Governor with consistently working against it. But the latter did never care to meet it or rebut it; his superiors, Lord Linlithgow and Mr. Amery, appear never to have asked him to publicly explain his conduct, questioned publicly as it has been by a Minister of the crown. So we are left with one side of the version. Sir John Herbert has left this world to settle account with his Maker, but his earthly superiors have up till now taken no step to vindicate the character of his administration of Bengal when a great volume of opinion in the province challenges it. On the 28th. of March, 1943, he surprised Mr. Fazlul Huq with a demand for resignation without giving him an opportunity to consult his colleagues in the Ministry or the Ministerial Party which the day before had defeated the Opposition by a handsome majority. Why Mr. Fazlul Huq did not refuse to resign and thus force the Governor to dismiss him, we have not been told. The Governor is said to have asked for this resignation in order to make it possible for him to form an all-Parties Ministry. In course of the discussion on the 27th. March, Mr. Fazlul Huq had announced his willingness to sacrifice his position for such a development. The

**Fazlul Huq
Ministry
& the Governor**

mouth-piece of the Muslim League party in the Bengal Assembly on that particular occasion had made a dead set against the Chief Minister by saying that "as long as Mr. Fazlul Huq stays there, as long as the Hindu parties think that they can use him as a puppet, as long as they can bolster him up and support him, there is very little chance of compromise and understanding between us...We cannot come to an agreement as long as one particular person is being propped up by one party.....should this impediment disappear.....on our part there will be no stone unturned to arrive at an agreement between the Hindus and Muslims." The spirit of personal vendetta displayed in these words did not make any appeal to the vast majority of the members appealed to, though their confidence in Mr. Huq did not avert the result—the end of this Ministry, the nearest approach to a non-communal Ministry that it was possible to have in Bengal under the dispensation of the Macdonald "Communal Award".

The Ministry that was pushed into power under the leadership of Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin was faced with a food situation that was perilously near famine. For about a month the province was ruled by the Governor under Sec. 93 ; and these days were utilized by the aspirants to the Ministry in securing new recruits with promises of the good things of the earth. The Governor was more than helpful ; while he had refused the request of Mr. Fazlul Huq to expand his Ministry of eight by the addition of two "scheduled class" members, on the present occasion he allowed Sir Nazimuddin to have a Ministry of thirteen with not less than that bunch of Parliamentary Secretaries. Mr. Fazlul Huq had been content with a single Parliamentary Secretary. There is nothing legally corrupt in this arrangement ; but the opening of flood-gates of political patronage by Sir John Herbert recalls to memory how in Britain's island history this trick enabled Walpole and Pitt to work parliamentary institutions. As our legislators are trying to learn the trade, they must also be prepared to imitate those examples, to adopt the trade mark of British parliamentarism. This was, however, an episode soon forgotten ; but the evil may live long with us.

Of more immediate importance, however, was the way in which the new Ministry would be meeting the problem of food for the people of Bengal. They must have known the many pitfalls that their predecessors had failed to negotiate or been unable. They must have known that the problem had been made almost hopelessly difficult by the policies and practices of the Writers' Building wisecracs. They must have known that in meeting the needs of their people they would have to depend on the good offices of a Central Government that had been proved ineffective, to depend on the "surplus" provinces for the flow of food to their people. Knowing these difficulties the Ministry could only justify its existence by the success which it could make of the food job. When Sir Nazimuddin accepted the commission from the Governor to form the Ministry, and after distributing basketfuls of patronage succeeded in drawing

away a certain number of the supporters of Mr. Fazlul Huq from their political allegiance to him, he must have known that Bengal was "deficit" in food, and that without the help of the Central Government it would not be possible for him to get food grains from the "surplus" areas. But he could not declare, as his predecessor had not been able to do, that deficit position; his Civil Supplies Minister, Mr. Suhrawardy, and his Finance Minister, Mr. Tulsī C. Goswami, both of them were found to be echoing the Government of India thesis that Bengal was not "deficit". When these bold assertions proved false, the former had the hardihood to say that he knew the true position but he uttered the contrary and felt clear in his conscience in this matter because he did not want the people to get panicky with regard to the food situation. And when the Ministry found that it had gone beyond their control, of the control of Lord Linlithgow's Government, it could only imitate the ineffectiveness of the Delhi-Simla bureaucracy. They got defeated at the hands of hoarders and profiteers of rice as the latter had been in the matter of wheat. Their confession of defeat was quite handsome:

"When on 11th, March last the Bengal Government abolished statutory maximum prices for rice and paddy they hoped that this step would mobilize boarded stocks, bring them more freely into the market and so reduce the level of prices.

These hopes have been belied. At the present time prices are at a level out of reach of a large section of the population....."

The Opposition could not fail to point out that under the new Ministry things had got worse; that the stories of corruption that had been bandied about during the Fazlul Huq regime were more plentiful during the Nazimuddin regime. This hot controversy led people in the other parts of India to think that famine in Bengal had become

the sport of politics, that Bengalee politicians found more time in fighting amongst themselves than in fighting the famine. Mr. Mahommed Ali Jinnah was constrained to declare that his followers accepted the Bengal Ministry knowing full well that they could act only as members of the "fire brigade," the food situation in Bengal having reached the stage of a conflagration. The criticism of his party, as voiced forth by the Secretary of the Muslim League, a member of the Central Assembly, at this state of things was directed personally against Lord Linlithgow, who was Food Member if there was such a thing in his Government even at the beginning of 1943. The question has yet to be answered—why did the Muslim League politicians accept the Bengal Ministry with such eagerness, why did they go into so much trouble and manoeuvring, knowing the consequences of this eagerness for power which did not take long to come as during the latter half of 1943 famine conditions revealed themselves in their full ghastliness? Perhaps, considerations of political strategy moved the Muslim League leadership in taking this fateful step. They forgot the lesson of the life of the Muslim Finance Minister who in the year 1769—'70 had tried to please the masters of the East India Company and was made by them into a scape-goat of their fleeing the country. So will Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and his Ministry find mention in Bengal's history as the "autonomy Ministry" that failed to meet the

food situation of the province, and by failing was responsible for the death of millions of their fellow-countrymen and women. Their title to a place in history was that they agreed to serve as a smoke-screen to the incompetence of the Linlithgow Government.

We have discussed thus far the administrative chaos that has been responsible for this famine. We have to find the positive acts that precipitated it. We have heard of the "denial policy"

Workings of "denial policy" in the carrying out of which the then Governor of Bengal, the late Sir John Herbert, had played such an enthusiastic part. We have been told that this "denial policy" handled only about 40,000 tons of paddy and rice, about 10 lakh maunds of these. To outer seeming the amount is nothing compared to the 30 crore maunds of rice that is Bengal's annual requirement. But there is no doubt that this step started a disturbance in the normal economic life of the people, sapping their "confidence" in the established order of things. We have also been told that the major portion of this "denial" of food-grains was used to feed the people of Bengal; less than a quarter went out of the province. Being some sort of a military tactics, this "denial policy" is shrouded in secrecy; even people like Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, who had "something to do" with this matter, cannot make it comprehensible to the public; owing to this secrecy people have put all sorts of interpretations on the matter. In the August (1940) session of the Central Assembly Sir Abdul Halim could only point out by dark hints and suggestions to the devious ways in which this policy was carried out. And those speaking on behalf of the Government could not remove the impression created by these hints and suggestions. They were less than frank in the matter.

While on this subject of "denial policy", one is tempted to test its usefulness under modern conditions in the crucible of experience gained during the present war, as well during China's six years' fight against Japanese imperialism. This policy had an uglier ring in the phrase—"scorched earth policy." The Anglo-Indian bureaucracy have tried to make it acceptable by this change of name. Historians have told us that Napoleon's invasion of Russia was frustrated by the burning of everything before his army—houses, buildings, granaries, standing crops—anything that could be of use to the enemy. China is also in a position to claim that she has been able to hold up for these years by following this tactics; Russians are said to have drawn upon Chinese experience during their present fight with the German hordes; they are reported to have sent men from their fighting forces for a course of training in the Chinese school. So much has been written on this subject that it requires hard-boiled scepticism to question its validity, the thoroughness of the destruction that the "scorched earth policy" calls before the mind. The first thing to consider is that this policy has not been able to halt the initial sweep of the invading armies either in China or in Russia; that the destruction in no case has been as complete as the policy required for its success. In Burma also the retreating British army was said to have burned its way back to India. That did not prevent Japanese forces from over-running the country. We do not know the details of destruction that Chinese

armies wrought in their own country; the same is the case with Russia. In the adoption of the "denial policy" by the Linlithgow Government under military advice, we feel that it was done as routine business, success or failure in which did not matter much. For, it is difficult to believe that the Delhi-Simla military bureaucracy could think that invading Japanese army with their possession of the granary of Burma would be much inconvenienced by the "denial" of food grains in the eastern provinces of India where flowing rivers and creeks would enable *shampans* to accompany them with food. If Japan could invade these areas they would have established control over the head of the Bay of Bengal; the possession of the Andamans should have made it easy for them. They failed to exploit this advantage in 1942; the first six months of 1943 have also passed without the Japanese being able to come over. It is not possible for us to pass judgment on the success or failure of the so-called "denial policy" that has caused so much suffering, upsetting the whole economic life of the coastal areas on the Bay of Bengal, spreading from Bengal to Ceylon. In the absence of fuller knowledge which would be forth-coming after the war when the various phases of war tactics would be scientifically studied, we need not be dogmatic. The following from the *Review of World Affairs* of November, 1942, should help us to stay judgment. The article dealt with the "denial policy" followed by the Soviet in its attempt to halt the German invasion.

"Between the 22nd June and October 20th (1942)—120 days—the enemy advanced along three main routes which, when measured as the crow flies, was in the north a distance of approximately 400 miles, in the central sector 600 miles, in the south nearly 700 miles. This was a gigantic operation, and we would be foolish to under-estimate it....."

"But the achievement is very dangerously under-estimated. People have not realized that the industries and resources lost by the Russians have been in a large measure gained by the enemy. As reported last month the earth is not as scorched as some think. Damage there has been, but if we take the most important—namely, the Dneiprovostov Dam—we must report that it is not beyond repair. At this very moment 1,50,000 Russians are working at the job. Throughout the conquered territory the Germans have set to work with demoniical energy to organize and restore. The system is ruthless, the method brutal, but the job is being done, and the enemy is making the utmost use of his gains."

The amount of food grains involved in these "denial policy" operations, as told us in Government statements, may not be large.

Purchase of food-grains by Government & others But these released certain abnormal forces over the country-side that disrupted the economic structure of our habitual, placid life. In addition to meeting the needs of the "denial policy," the Government had to have food grains for the use of its fighting forces, for the vaster number of workers in the war industries, for the few lakhs of its officers of all grades; the railway administrations entered the market for providing food for its people; the industrialists followed this example. All these combined to initiate the policy of purchase that has come to be known as "procurement." This vast operation of purchase became connected with the "denial policy" in the month of April—May, 1942. Previous to this period, "procurement" had been a normal process for the fighting forces only. The exigencies of war made it into a flood where competing purchasers descended on the market and upset its balance. This was how the "denial policy" and the "procurement" policy got entangled with each other.

For carrying out the policy of removing "surplus food stuffs from the coastal districts" of Bengal, the Government appointed certain agents whose duty it was to remove these "to safer and deficit areas as far as possible." Muslim League politicians have told us that the Government went down on its knees to Clive Street, to help them carry out this project.

But Clive Street, the "Big Business" of Calcutta dominated by Scotchmen, would not respond. So Sir John Herbert without consulting his Ministers placed this work in the hands of Ispahani & Co. But the Ministry did not like a political rival handling such a big contract. With a view to placate them the Governor seems to have permitted the appointment of certain other agents suggested by the Ministers. This was how Mirza Ali Akbar, Ispahani Co.'s nominee, had to agree to the distribution of the work among four other agents—H. Datta, A. Bhattacharya, B. K. Poddar and Ahmed Khan. The first-named purchased about 3 lakhs maunds of rice and paddy; the second about 4 lakhs maunds, the third about 90 thousand maunds; the fourth about a lakh maunds; and the fifth about one lakh ten thousand maunds. The limit of the price fixed by the Government within which these agents were to make their purchases was about Rs. 6 per maund. There were other agents—bigger agents—Ralli Bros., Steel Bros., Louis Dephres, the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation, to name only a few—who did the same job for the Government in this and in other provinces of India. It is a moot question whether or not the purchasing agents of the Government kept inside the limit of the price ceiling fixed by the Government. Their method of business has been looked upon with increasing suspicion by the general public.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi who has his affiliations with the Government and is a businessman who has his finger in many a pie in the line has by his indiscreet speeches in the Central Assembly exposed the activities of the Government agents. Speaking in February, 1943, when wheat prices appear to have been giving trouble, he said:

"Here there was a ceiling price and wheat in the market could not be sold at more than that price. Government themselves began to buy freely, through their agents, in Bombay and Karachi, at higher prices than the controlled rates—thus themselves violating the price which they had fixed for others.....this was the cause of the failure of the fixation of ceiling price for wheat.....The result was that all wheat in the market went underground.....This benefited neither the farmer nor the man in the street."

The same thing happened to rice in Bengal. Let us describe the working of this process in Sir Abdul Halim's words:

"The Hon'ble Somerset Butler who has the experience of the working of the rice control scheme in Burma was the officer who was entrusted with the work of carrying on the denial policy and who had instructed the buying agents to buy at Rs. 6-8 per maund in the mufasil while the Secretary to the Commerce Dept. of the Government, had fixed the maximum price of rice at Calcutta at Rs. 6-8.....The Government of India's agents were buying rice in the mufasil at Rs. 6-8 plus 10 per cent at discretion. How then could the merchants sell that rice at Rs. 6-8 at Calcutta? So they stopped importing rice to Calcutta and that resulted in the artificial shortage of rice in Calcutta."

At the August session of the Assembly he returned to the charge:

"When the Government of India fixed the ceiling price of wheat at Rs. 6 at its source plus the transit charges to its destination where it will be sold, the

**United Kingdom
Commercial
Corporation**

United Kingdom Commercial Corporation were freely buying at Bombay and Karachi at a much higher price than was fixed by the Government of India. That being the case, how could anybody believe that the level of price could be kept down? Perhaps, the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation can be said to be the first to create a black market in this country."

Some more light was sought to be thrown on this matter at the discussion in the Bengal Legislature in the middle of 1942, when members representing constituencies of the countryside brought the charge that the prices fixed by the Government were more often than not beaten down by the agents, dressed in the authority of the ruling

**How Government
agents depressed
the market**

authorities. The police and even A. R. P. volunteers were seen acting as guides to these purchasers; their presence in the village markets in the company of the agents' people created an impression that helped to depress the market, to keep other purchasers off, to create conditions that favoured what is known as "cornering." It is in an atmosphere of unsettlement created by fear of Japanese invasion, created by Governmental measures adopted to foil this invasion, that the agents of the Government, purchasing food-grains on behalf of the Government, found an opportunity to buy cheap and sell high. This was the beginning of the mischief. Other mischiefs followed naturally. Big businessmen doing war work, controlling thousands of men doing jobs essential for war, entered the rice market, and helped the confusion started by the Government agents. They hoarded food-grains for their workers, in many cases in excess of their requirements. Purchases by the Government, also in excess of their requirements, pushed the confusion a little farther.

These accumulations deprived vast areas of the country of their normal stock of food-grains. These accumulations, these hoardings, should bear a part of the responsibility for the famine conditions prevalent in the country. We have been told that the hoardings for the fighting forces are renewed every six months, the old stocks being thrown

**Food-grains rott-
ing in Govern-
ment's care**

on the market every six months. We do not know in what condition these stocks are when these are thought to be unfit for the consumption of the fighting forces. From our experience of Government supplies to the civil population during 1943, from what we have seen of Government stocks of food-grains in railway stations and sidings, in the *godowns* spread over Bengal, both in the urban and rural areas, we cannot say that the hoardings under Government are quite fit for human consumption. We know that even when these had begun rotting, the red-tapism inseparable from Government offices did not allow these to be released in time. This happened when men, women and children were not able to secure food for themselves. District authorities, their supply officers, were found helpless in ordering the movement of these food-grains at the time when under their jurisdiction people were starving, dying in hundreds and thousands. Statistics may be produced by Government apologists to prove that their arrangements were of the best or could not be improved upon. But these claims have been tested in the crucible of sufferings of millions. The dread experience of famine that Bengal has passed through has tested these arrangements, and written its verdict in the pages of history.

While writing in such detail of the personal and impersonal forces that precipitated scarcity and famine in the country we have been conscious of the fact that we are in the grip of forces that are non-moral or a-moral. Responsibility for this break-down in decent human relations may or may not be brought home to individuals or group of individuals.

**Exploiters and
profiteers of
Indian birth**

The demand for the impeachment of Lord Linlithgow and his advisers for this debacle may have only a historical interest now. But what we are more concerned with is not the past but the future. We are convinced that what has happened could not have happened if men of Indian birth had not succumbed to the impulses of greed, of getting "rich quick" driven thereto by the opportunities opened by the war. Many a "House" might build up its fortunes by exploiting the helplessness of their neighbours. But the harm done to the moral life of the community by the outburst of the greed will live amongst us and influence conduct for generations to come. It is to the workings of this poisonous infection in the body of society in the present and in the immediate future that we look with apprehension. Men and women who could succumb to this temptation will not be very congenial people to live and converse with, decent people to commerce with in things of body and mind. We have very often felt that the late Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, the Bengalee novelist, was right when he had said that in a subject country the political quarrels and controversies that make so much of history and which appear to be mainly directed against the rule of the alien authority are really between sections of opinion and interests in the heart of the subject population. These quarrels and controversies are really caused by the divergent views entertained by various elements of the subject population with regard to the elements of good and evil implicit in alien rule. When they are agreed that the best of alien rule is evil, the quarrels and controversies cease or are not much heard of, and the days of alien rule are numbered. In the light of this remark of our great novelist, the quarrels and controversies that have been raging round the famine in India, it is up to the Indian publicist to trace the causes to the impulses of greed that broke loose among the men of Indian birth and created such a havoc amongst us. The external authority against which the unbribed intellect of the country has been fighting all these decades is external to our life because it has never cared to shed its external habits. Today when we claim that we have understood the wrongs done by this external authority, it would be more wise, more honourable, to direct our attention to the sources of evil amongst us than in the external authority which happen to hold sway over our life. In this search we are confronted with the fact that men of Indian birth co-operated with the operations of the Government which knowingly or unknowingly have brought the disaster to the country, causing the death of millions.

This fact should be burnt into our conscience, into the conscience of our society in the heart of which these Indian profiteers will live and work. In the food-grains trade these exploiters have sought to cover the traces of their evil doings by directing the attention of the public to the policy of the Government. It may be difficult for the general public to spot out the activities of the Indian exploiter and

**Cloth famine—
cloth makers and
dealers of India**

profiteer hid as these are behind or under the activities of the Commerce, Supply and Transport Departments of the Government in India. But the section of them which are connected with the manufacture and trade of cloth cannot hide their shame behind the incompetence of the bureaucracy and its erratic policy. They have driven their people to go in rags or go naked by pushing the price of cloth four times that prevailing before the war. They have shown by their conduct that to keep them straight, to compel them to follow honest trade, Japanese and British and other foreign cloth interests should be allowed to compete with Indian mill-made textiles. The absence of these competitors, owing to the war, has enabled the Indian manufacturer and trader in cloth to grind the face of their Indian neighbours, men and women and children. We have been told that owing to Government monopoly of the products of the Indian cotton mills, the people have had to go in rags or go naked. Here also statistics are thrown at us to confuse the issue, to mislead the people. But we find cloth-mill owners or their managing agents making a present of a pair of *saree* or *dhooti* within the price level of Rs. 3 a pair, as certain Bengalee cloth mills are known to have done on the occasion of the Durga Puja of 1943 in favour of their share-holders. These pairs of cloth could not have been made a gift of at less than cost price. It has not yet been explained how this trick could be done. A member of the managing agency of a particular mill was asked by a share-holder, who had been benefitted by the gift of cloth, how this could be done; he was put off with the remark that there are many intricacies in the matter which it would require a long time to explain.

It has been proved that the much-advertised "standard cloth" could not reach the users owing to delay caused by the haggling of the mill interests for their pound of flesh. In the month of June, 1943, "Standard cloth" the Government announced their measures for the scandal "control on the prices of cotton cloth and yarn." If we are to put trust in reports from Bombay there appears to have been a tug of war between the Secretary of the Government of India in the Industry and Supply Departments and the representatives of the mill-owners. The latter are said to have opposed the scheme by a frontal attack on Government failure to distribute the 50 million yards of "standard cloth" that were to have been in use by the second week of April 1943, on their allowing the export of 1,000 million yards of textiles instead of the pre-war 100 million yards. The constitution of the Control Board on which the success of the cloth-control scheme depended showed that they had been able to impose their terms on the Government. Out of the 25 seats in the Board not less than 15 were given to the mill-owners of Bombay, Ahmedabad, North and South India; 2 seats went to the cotton trading interests held by the very interests that dominated the textile industry; 5 seats were given to traders and distributors affiliated to the same interests; Labour got only 1 representative. Thus the various interests got 96 per cent representation in the Control Board; the 39 crores of consumers got almost none. The cloth famine of 1942—'43 proved that the Government which was supposed to represent the people was as careless and incapable of protecting their interests as it has shown itself to be in

the matter of food. A lot of play was made with the fact that during the last six months of 1943 the price of cloth had come down 40 per cent, that is, while in the beginning of the year it had been Rs. 10 to 12 a pair, during the latter half it was Rs. 7 and 8. We do not think that this was any relief to the consumers when we remember that this pair of cloth could be got for less than Rs 3. The trick of the new order of things was that after having pushed the price of cloth to four times the pre-war price and extorting it from them, the consumers were asked to be thankful to the cloth manufacturers and cloth dealers for bringing it down! As in food so in cloth, "cornering" was allowed to flourish under the very nose of the Government. In Delhi, it has been reported, there was in *godowns* cloth worth five crores of rupees; in Amritsar were huge stocks to last for a year. The Government failed to control this profiteering. It has been suggested that the lure of Excess Profits Tax stayed the hands of the authorities. And Mr. Jamnadas Mehta was not far wrong in his remark that the *Bania* has beaten the Briton in this game.

It has often been discussed among the people that the hoarders and profiteers could not have evaded the law if there had been no connivance of their anti-social practices both by the Government and the public. It is quite possible that a certain section of the public which was making money were able to throw a smoke-screen around their goings-on, helped thereto by corruption in the high places of social and administrative life. Otherwise it is difficult to explain the failure of the Government to suppress activities that defied their so-called Defence of India Rules. This failure showed that there were elements in Indian society which, if they felt inclined or found it profitable, could hold the forces of law at bay, could defeat Government in one of the major fields of its many duties. Why these elements did not choose to fight the Government in the political field, and wrest power from it? The student of affairs in India has to find a clue to this question. Again, why should the vast majority of the people, more than 90 per cent of them, consent to be exploited by their neighbours, as it was done in 1943? The Food Minister in the Nazimuddin Ministry in Bengal when he returned discomfited from his "food drive", from hunting out the hoards of food in the homes of the people, is said to have declared that the hoarders evaded him and his hunters by removing their hoards to jungles and other out-of-the-way places. This removal could not have been done without the help of conveyances, of porters. The hoards could not have been removed without the people in the neighbourhood knowing something about it. Why did not these people whom the removal of food from their midst hit so hard, why did not these people raise up the hue and cry, and set the forces of law on the track of these vanishing food grains? The failure of the people to put a stop to these activities that threatened the life of them all, of their near and dear ones—how are we to explain it? The questions raised here deserved enquiry by those who aspired to lead public life, to organize their people for the assertion of their rights as human beings, as citizens of a modern State. Unless they can get at the root of this helplessness, of this lethargy on the part of the major-

ity, they will fail in their attempt to wrest political power from the present holders thereof. The better life cannot be built on such littleness of mind, on listlessness that would not put up a fight for the bare necessities of life.

About forty years back Lord Curzon, the then Governor-General of India, during one of his most expansive moods of imperialistic drum-beating, addressing the tea planters in the Surma Valley of Assam, had declared that administration and exploitation were parts of the same duty in the government of India. This administration was carried on with the help of our people; this exploitation both in its good sense and bad is being carried on with the co-operation of our people. It has been a silent process, sucking the blood of the victim unknowingly to him. Now and then our people grow conscious of it, raise a howl, and make a row. 1943 was such an occasion. The Government in India and its Indian co-partners were caught in their game. The game was that concerned with financing the war activities. The "defence expenditure" has more than quadrupled under its various disguises. Lord Linlithgow's Finance Member had to find money for this: willingly or unwillingly the people of India have had to find it for him. One of his devices has been the levying of an excess profits tax. The mill-owners of Ahmedabad are said to have put Rs. 10 crores, and the cloth dealers Rs. 2 crores on this account alone. These amounts they have taken out of the consumers, and paid them into Sir Jeremy Raisman's hands. In this transaction they have acted as collectors on behalf of the Government. If these men of Indian birth had not indulged in the orgy of profiteering, the amount of excess profits tax would on paper have made a smaller show. But they chose to find it more profitable to play Sir Jeremy's game, and thus helped in grinding the face of their own people. In this connection a great word-play is being enacted by the use of the words—inflation and deflation. Very few of us can be expected to understand the significance of these words; though we may be made to feel in our bones their depredations. The editor of the London *Economist* has tried to make the subject comprehensible to our understanding by saying that "inflation" is the "name given to the method of reducing the consumption of the public by increasing the prices of things they buy.....if the Government's expenditure increases without the public's expenditure being reduced, pound for pound, then, whatever the outward appearance of the financial devices adopted, they are in fact, inflationary." Judged by this test, the hand of the Government in pushing the prices of commodities of every-day use is unmistakable. And our Indian manufacturers and traders have added strength to this hand. So will history judge.

We have been led to devote so much space to a discussion of the break-down of social life in our country not because we expected better things from the imperialism that holds sway over us, but because we expected better things of our manufacturers and traders, many of whom have for the last quarter of a century had opportuni-

**Administration &
exploitation
inter-linked**

**Gandhiji's
struggle
against these**

ty to imbibe the lessons of the life of Mahatma Gandhi with his message of non-exploitation. We know that our leader has no illusions with regard to the spirit that moves the ordinary man in his money-making activities. He has given us a glimpse of his mind in the *Hind Swaraj* wherein he drew pointed attention to the way in which the mill-owners of western India had exploited the Swadeshi movement initiated by Bengal in the opening years of the present century. This is an old history today. But we grieve that many of us who have had that bitter experience have lived to see and suffer from the outburst of the same selfish, shameless greed. And in such moments we are driven to cynicism as we watch the deterioration that set in the public morality of our country. It is of these weaknesses of this nature that Gandhiji has been trying all these years to rid our national life; it is really against narrowness of vision found in our make-up that he has been staking his life on so many occasions trying to recall us to our glory as human beings and Indians. His latest fast of 21 days may appear to be directed against the stogginess of Lord Linlithgow, against the aspersions that the British bureaucracy has thrown on his life's mission. But really it was against our internal weaknesses that enabled Lord Linlithgow to act as he did.

We do not propose here to go over the reasons adduced in the Tottenham pamphlet published by the Government of India on the 13th February, 1943. British propaganda has seen to it that the disturbances that had followed the arrest of the Congress leaders after the passing of the "Quit India" resolution by the All-India Congress Committee should be interpreted to the "United Nations" public as a deliberate interference with the organisation of offensive operations against Japan with India as its main base and source of supply. The violence that had characterized this ebullition of public feeling was represented as desired by Mahatma Gandhi, as a smoke-screen for his pose of moral warfare, robbed of all bitterness, pointing out to a new technique of fighting injustice and regaining self-respect, individual and national. For about four months this mud-slinging continued to mislead the world, to discredit the principle to the service of which Gandhiji has devoted half a century of active life. And at the Aga Khan's palace Gandhiji had writhed at this mis-representation, till his patience appeared to have snapped. He wrote to Lord Linlithgow a personal letter protesting against this official propaganda, asking to be convinced by proofs of the complicity of the Congress with the violence that the arrest of Congress leaders had precipitated; he assured Lord Linlithgow that he would make "ample amends" if the official charge-sheet could be brought home to him. This expostulation did not move the "stern symbol of British policy"—to whom "British praise went for being the first Viceroy to withstand the pressure of a Gandhi fast", to quote a U.S. weekly, the *Time* of New York. India might palpitate with anxiety at the news that at his seventy-fourth year Gandhiji was preparing himself for a fast of 21 days with a view to cleanse himself and the atmosphere of the frustration that hovered over his native land. But the leading countries

His latest fast
& its reaction
on opinion

of Europe and America amongst the "United Nations" could have no appreciation of the Gandhian method of political warfare. The paper we have already quoted put their point of view when it said :

"The blunt truth was that the western world had always been less interested in the fate of India than in the turn of war between the British Raj and such articulate Indians as Mohandas Gandhi. Now, once the excitement of the fast was over, the West was not greatly concerned about the life or death of a shrivelled little man in a loin cloth."

These words may sound very cruel in our ears. But the people of India would be gaining an understanding of "real politics" which influence politicians most if these words are accepted as friendly advice. The Archbishop of Canterbury might deplore that the political deadlock should have persisted, betokening a "spiritual alienation" not only between India and Britain but between India and the world for which the U.S. weekly speaks. Writings in connection with this matter, appearing in Britain and the United States, have followed the line thrown by the spokesman of the Government in India when it characterized Gandhiji's fast as "political blackmail"; as intending "to restore failing leadership", to use the words of the *New York Herald-Tribune*. Another U.S. weekly, the *Nation*, meant kindly when it wrote: "Mr. Gandhi's 21-day fast appears to be politically a confession of weakness and personally a token of strength." We are prepared to leave it at that, knowing full well that the strength of inspiration in the leadership spreads amongst the commonalty of the land, that the spark of divinity impregnates the common clay in and through a gifted man who feels the most the injustices and brutalities of existence and by his reaction to these shortens the lease of their life. Since Gandhiji came into the leadership of his people he has not only purified himself through successive "crucifixion" of the flesh but has helped to purify increasing numbers of men and women both inside and outside of India, strengthening their faith in the ultimate goodness of human nature which is growing increasingly more conscious of the futility of the ways of politicians in settling international differences. It is in this larger hope that Gandhiji has been living; it has been sustaining him through the many "experiments with truth" that he has undertaken. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, has described for us how he felt as he was privileged to watch by the bed-side of Gandhiji as a medical attendant. "It was like watching a *yagna*; watching a devotee at his prayers", sharing in the penance of a great soul, his "tapasya". Horace Alexander, chief of the Friends' Ambulance Unit (India), who has established kinship with our country's aspirations through his love of the ideal that Gandhiji has made his own, indicated the way in which a Christian should react to the spiritual ordeal that he had witnessed.

"...to me, I think above all, it is a call to re-dedication. In part, to me, it is a solemn act of self-purification and re-dedication for the sins and sufferings of India and of the world. I think that is surely a part of his message that he sent to us, by calling us to fresh dedication of our lives in the service of suffering humanity."

Western commentators, the majority of them, appear to have no better appreciation of Gandhiji's method than that of "his shrewd sense of politics and his ability to regain prestige on fruit juice, water and an unquenchable spirit". To Lord Linlithgow and his brood of British politicians this particular Indian is "a traitor at worst, a troublesome mystic at best"; and their handling of the situations created by him during the last three decades first in South Africa and then in India has been moved by this opinion of Gandhiji's personality. The rabid amongst British propagandists have blared about Gandhiji's affiliation with the enemies of the present leadership of the "United Nations"; they have publicized their belief that the Indian National Congress guided by him was prepared to make on behalf of India its peace with Japan. They were, however, not sure of this brief. Lord Linlithgow's Home Member in course of his speech during the autumn session (1942) of the Central Assembly tried to say something about the synchronization of the "Quit India" movement with the expected Japanese invasion—"at a time when there was little fear of the development of an enemy attack"; this plea was not sustainable as no Japanese attack could be developed at the height of the monsoon, in August, when the Government itself had precipitated the disturbances by arresting the Congress leaders. During the winter session of the Central Legislature on the occasion of the adjournment motion moved by Sri Lakshmi Kantra Moitra, secretary of the Nationalist Party in the Central Assembly, rising out of Gandhiji's fast, the Home Member returned to the same plea—that the Congress had hoped that their movement would coincide in time with the apprehended Japanese invasion. The Government refused to budge from their position that no parley could be held with "rebels", even with those who non-violently worked towards disruption of the war activities being organized in India. The controversy with regard to this matter has a historic interest today. The difference of opinion between the people of India and representatives of the British Government in this as in other factors in the Indo-British relationship will remain unbridged as long as they cannot agree with regard to the fundamentals of India's demand for freedom, for *Swaraj* which is another name for national self-respect. The "spiritual alienation" between the two peoples could not be better illustrated than the "logical" way in which Lord Linlithgow was allowed to handle the question raised by Gandhiji's fast.

It is a misfortune that this should have been so. The bitterness between India and Britain has had wider ramifications both for the present and for the future. Politicians in Britain might be found to heave a sigh of relief that the "rebellion"; in India has been beaten down into sullen silence. But this sullen attitude has been extending to other members of the "United Nations"; they feel that they are acting as pawns in Britain's imperialistic game; respect for and sympathy with the cause they represent have lost their initial vigour; all the high-sounding declarations about the "four freedoms" have been losing their appeal. And the people of India appear to be

resigning themselves to a listless acceptance of things as they are. Sensitive minds in India regard this symptom as very unhealthy both for their own people and for the society of nations which cannot function peacefully with a resentful people of 400 millions, nursing a grievance, ever open to appeals for the rectifications of wrongs made by other frustrated peoples. Indians have survived British "dragooning" for decades past, and they hope to be able to survive a longer regime of it. She holds a key position in Asia, and with her unreconciled there cannot be a ordered peace in this continent at least, not to speak of any world-wide "new order". We do not think that the leaders of the "United Nations" do not realize the full implications of the "deadlock" in India. But they appear to be as helpless in the hands of fate as the people of this country are thought to be.

We know that the majority of the leaders of the "United Nations" have recognized the validity of the British plea that as the various "elements" in India's myriad-minded people cannot by themselves come to an agreed formula as to what they want, as to the contents of the freedom that they demand, Britain has been left no choice but to hold on to the existing arrangements, specially at a time when these arrangements are essential for the conduct of military operations against the Asiatic member of the Axis Nations. British politicians have been saying that their anxiety to throw the reins of political power over India has created fear among those elements of the Indian population who apprehend that the ruling classes who will be inheriting this power will do them less justice than they have been receiving at British hand. This fear Britain, true to her trust, cannot ignore or brush aside. This unwillingness of Britain can only be removed if the various schools of political thought, the representatives of India's various material interests, can work out a joint claim that Britain, true to her many declarations, will have to admit. The varieties of demands made by the different elements of the Indian population are hard to reconcile. The ruling authorities have tried to do so, but have failed. Whether this confession of failure is a pretence or not will remain a matter of controversy. There is hardly a responsible public man in India who does not feel and has not given public expression to the feeling that this confession of failure has been a pose and a pretence. The history of British rule in this country is littered with decisions that the external authority has imposed upon the country against the inclinations and interests of its inhabitants. The present war, the way in which India was unceremoniously pushed into it, is the latest case in point. The British Government knows it, or to be honest, ought to know it. No wide-awake political party has liked this entanglement, not even the Muslim League which is being used by British imperialists as their trump card against the Indian demand for *Swaraj*. This organisation and the party it represents have not, as an organisation and as a party, consented to co-operate with the war activities as these are being conducted by the Delhi-Simla bureaucracy. The Indian National Congress had demanded that the British should "quit India" with goodwill and honourably. The Muslim League borrowed

the cry with a little variation. Its President could not think of a better slogan than—"Divide and Quit", thus stealing a thunder from the Congress. We do not know if Lord Linlithgow found any consolation in this new demand. He has not been able to respond to it, as he could not to the Congress demand.

Why the Government whose agent he is in India has not given practical shape to this demand of the disruptionists of the Muslim

The demand for
separate "sthans"
in India

League is not difficult to understand. It knows that there are other demands of an identical nature made on behalf of sentiments, ambitions and conceits for separate *enclaves* that would reduce the country that is

known to the world as Hindusthan to a zig-saw puzzle. The "non-accession" clause in the Cripps proposals had conceded the spirit of this demand, and thus stirred into consciousness many a sleeping ambition or conceit. We are, therefore, presented with the spectacle of Dr' Ambedkar's group of the "scheduled castes" wanting a separate "sthan" for themselves; of the section of the Justice Party in Madras represented by Mr Ramaswami Naicker wanting their "Dravidasthan"; of a section amongst the Sikhs wanting a separate "Khalsa" territory. These are the clamant voices that have made themselves articulate. We have no doubt that with the progress of time every bit of separate caste, class or credal group will be laying claim to separate bits of territory so that they could build therein their special character in culture. All such sentiments, ambitions and conceits have been floating in the air; not even the Muslim League has cared to chalk out the territories that would form the units of their Pakistan. We have been told that areas where the Muslims happen to be in a majority should be formed into separate States. Muslim League politicians have not cared to be more concrete or more logical. Because they happen to number less in census reports than the Hindus, so far as the whole country is concerned, they feel that it would not be possible for them to build up their special culture-life in the neighbourhood of other culture-groups. What these special characteristics are amongst our Muslim neighbours which require glass houses for their development, that have been withering in the atmosphere where other groups are having their being, the world has not yet been told. When science has been creating opportunities and instruments for the building up of a world culture, when smaller economic and material interests are being ironed out to form the basis of a world community of richer and more abundant life, India presents the picture of tiny separatist conceits and ambitions raising their heads and breaking up the unity and integrity of a land which geography and history have shaped as one. This irrationalism is, we hope, a passing phase lashed into view by encouragement from a State system that has not been able to send its roots into the soil of the country. If our hope be a liar, and our country is sought to be divided into so many hundreds of *ghettoes*,—the special areas in which the Jews were condemned to live in Europe,—we should prepare ourselves for a "hundred years" civil war in the country not less devastating than what the World War II. of the 20th century has been causing through continents. For, in this claim for the division of the country into as many States as there are castes and creeds, groups among castes and creeds, there are involved certain

principles of social organisation that have never been peacefully accepted or rejected. This is the verdict of history. Perhaps world developments may drive such narrowness from the region of practicality. But we have to be prepared for the worst, while hoping for the best.

When Sir Stafford Cripps was sent by the British War Cabinet with the copy of a draft declaration it was prepared to make, the vast majority of those who had interviews with him felt impelled to take exception to it owing to the presence therein of Clause—C—which ran as follows:

"His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to (1) the right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides. With such non-acceding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new constitution giving them the same full status as the Indian Union."

In this Clause separationists and disruptionists in India have found a new chapter of arguments for dividing the country. In the controversy that ensued and has continued since then the example of Soviet Russia has been quoted for the benefit and enlightenment of the Indian people. Art. XVII. of the Soviet constitution is relevant to the issue: "To every Union Republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U. S. S. R. " The "Dominions" of the British Empire enjoy this right. And as none of the constituents of the Soviet Republic and the British Empire have cared to exercise this right, it is urged for our assurance that the "non-accession" Clause in the Cripps declaration cannot be such a bogey as the majority of Indian politicians appear to regard it. The recognition of such a right is a concession to sentiment which has to be taken account of by rulers of States. The real binding forces of States are in these modern days economic and political—the sense that economic interests and the needs of defence are best served by the arrangements that bind the territories. The "Union Republics" of the Soviet Union are held together because they find in the economic system on which it has been reared a guarantee of social well-being, securing to every man, woman and child the greatest opportunities for the full flowering of his or her personality. The colonies of Britain that have developed into "dominions" today have been held together not so much by economic ties as by the enlightened self-interest that found in the British Navy the shield of their existence. Experience during the last World War as well as during the present, appears to be leading these "dominions" to think of other affiliations for the defence of their territorial integrity, specially those offered by the United States of America. In certain previous volumes of the *Indian Annual Register*, specially those of 1940 and 1941, we have discussed the tendencies of such a development. The Soviet Union is a new experiment in economic and political organization. By her heroic fight against Germany and her allies, almost single-handed, Russia has proved the inherent strength of the

organs of her State. None of her constituent States have taken advantage of her difficulties to break away from her society of peoples ; none of these have been found yielding to the temptations that Germany must have held to them, specially to those that lie in west Russia, almost across the German border. We have been told that the secret of cohesion lies in Art. XVII. of the Soviet Constitution, conceding to the constituent States the right to secede as and when they liked. We do not know. As we write, the announcement made by M. Molotov that the "Union Republics" would have the right to send their own diplomatic representatives to other States and maintain armies of their own may appear to have added strength to this argument. These two rights have been regarded as attributes of sovereignty, of sovereign independence. We do not propose to be hasty in analysing the many considerations that must have moved the Soviet rulers to concede these rights. We are prepared to leave the matter by quoting what observers have said with regard to the value of the "non-acceding" Clause. M. Stalin has been credited with finding this formula and binding thereby the heterogeneous elements in the Soviet State—a League of Nations. John Gunther in *Inside Europe*, in the "war edition" published in 1940, wrote :

"His main work was then (1921 and years following when Stalin was appointed Secretary-General of the Party by Lenin) in the sphere of Nationalities. (He had written in 1912 a book—*Socialism & the National Question*). As a non-Russian he was peculiarly fitted for this task. Soviet Russia was a *melange* of at least one hundred quite separate races and nationalities, and the job was to combine them into stable unity while conceding some measure of provincial autonomy, at least in spirit. Stalin, under Lenin, invented the idea of the U. S. S. R.—the convenient device by which independent and "autonomous" republics became the Soviet "Union", surrendering central authority to Moscow, retaining local administrative privileges."

We do not know how far the recent Molotov declaration will be modifying the existing arrangements wherein the "directives" issued from the Kremlin guide the life and thought of the more than eighteen crores of people living in areas as far apart as central Europe and the Maritime Province of Siberia. Apologists of the Muslim League ideology have been trying to rub it in that just as in the Soviet land peace and strength have been found by conceding to peoples of many races and traditions their right to live their own lives, so should Hindusthan secure these by conceding the Muslim League demand. As the Muslims of India are a "separate" nation, because they differ in certain habits of thought and every-day conduct from their neighbours, their right to "separate" bits of territory interspersed throughout the country is legitimate both in the law and the practice of nations. We have not been told how the Muslims of Samarkhand, for instance, have been able to accommodate themselves to the Soviet ideology, how the special characteristics of their 13-hundred years old traditions have managed to live and flourish under and side by side with those that have sprouted only 25 years back. The Russian example will lose its appeal unless we are made acquainted with facts that have a bearing on the matter under discussion. The beliefs and practices of the Soviet Republic have no relation to any of the other-worldly intuitions on which the major

Simplicity of
Soviet thought
and practice

religions of the world claim to build all their traditions. The ties that hold the millions of the Soviet land are made up of the warp and weft of economic activities. Art. XII. of the Soviet Constitution said: "In the U.S.S.R., work is the obligation and honourable duty of every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle—'He who does not work, neither will he eat.'" This simple formula is as old as creation, and Soviet philosophy does not recognize any other cement of social life. This simplicity has an appeal to a world burdened with a thousand inhibitions. Not so the idealisms that move the Muslim League propaganda. They are seeking to make the particularities of their life into so many barriers between neighbours amongst whom they have been living for centuries. In one breath they deny that the counting of heads has any validity in the State-life they would like to have in India; in the next they say that where they happen to be in a majority, men of other creeds must agree to yield to their claims as a majority. The principle of majority rule cannot thus be played with in a serious discussion that concerns the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of millions of human beings. If differences create the right to divide and separate, the minority may torpedo the Muslim League ideology as successfully as the Muslim League politicians have been holding up the advance of democratic freedom in this country. Before they expect people to seriously consider their proposals, they must show their hands—how do they propose to protect interests under whatever name these may pass—whether as Hindus or Muslims; whether as capitalists or proletariats; whether as workers in factories or in fields. They must show how they propose to solve this problem as it affected other minorities.

The logic of their propaganda should have told them that only a vast exchange of population in the immediate future can lay the foundation of the Pakisthan of their imagination. The Muslims from Bihar, for instance, must leave the homes of their fathers and be provided with newer homes in Bengal; the Hindus from east and north Bengal must seek shelter somewhere else; the Muslims from the Nizam's State must seek asylum in Sind or in the Punjab; the Hindus from these two provinces and from the State of Kashmir must strike up tent and go in search of fresh fields and pastures new. We have read of an exchange of population between Turkey and Greece that concerned only about 20 lakhs of people. If Pakisthan is to take shape in this country, the human beings that will be called upon to change places will be running into 4 or 5 crores. Muslim League politicians have not chosen to be explicit with regard to this logical consequence of their demands, they dare not present such a programme to their own co-religionists; they dare not terrify them with the prospect held forth by such a demand. Every province, every district, every sub-division and *taluka*, every cluster of villages will have to be presented with such a choice, for such a change of habitation. No other step except this can solve the minority problem in the shape the Muslim League politicians have chosen to raise it. But this is not the end of the story. The Pakisthan so formed must make provision for a *lebensraum*, for "living space", made

familiar to the world by the writings of the Nazi party men. As population increases Muslims or Hindus, as the case may be, may find their territories over-crowded. Where are they to go? No Hindusthan can allow Muslims to come from outside, disturbing the position of the majority population; so also no Pakisthan can allow Hindus from an over-crowded Hindusthan. This deadlock will be the parent of wars of conquest as Nazi Germany has preached and sought to practise. She has been doing it in the name of race; Muslims and Hindus of India will be required to do it in the name of religion. The present generation of Muslims may feel that this dark prospect is not for them; the future may be left to take care of itself. But we are sure that the vast majority of them do not realize that as other communities understand the implications of the demands made by the Muslim League they are getting careful of the immediate present. The furore raised by Mr. Fazlul Huq during the last census showed the direction of the storm.

Events happening in our neighbourhood also illustrate this aspect of the matter. In course of discussion in the Central Legislature on the famine conditions in Bengal wherein suggestions for long-range plans for making this province and the other areas near about self-sufficient in the matter of food grains were made, complaints were uttered by certain members that there were about 20 lakhs of virgin acres in the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam that, when cultivated, will provide food for millions. But owing to the opposition of the local people to the influx of cultivators, men from Bengal, whether Hindu or Muslim—this vast area has been lying unused. The opposition of the local people is due to the fact that the emigrants were not Assamese-speaking and differed from them by certain habits of social life. The vast majority of the local people are Hindus; and we have reason to believe that their opposition is being strengthened by the feeling that the emigrants, the majority of whom have been Muslims from Bengal, should not be allowed to convert their fair Valley into a Pakisthan. This will happen if they are allowed to come in unchecked. Muslim League propagandists have made no secret of their ambition to be able to swamp the local people. But their loud-voiced desires have warned the local people of the danger to their material and non-material interests held by these. And they have been watchfully observing the activities of the Assam Ministry which happens to have a leader of the Muslim League as its chief minister. And the secret machinations on behalf of "Pakisthan" in this area in which members of this Ministry appear to have had a hand are traceable in many of its measures. But owing to the complications created by the war most of these activities escape scrutiny today. These areas form part of the eastern front where Japanese concentrations have been testing the strength of the defence arrangements made by the Anglo-American military authorities. And behind the screen raised by these war activities Sir Muhammad Saadulla and his followers have been playing their game. Famine conditions in Bengal have been driving thousands of Bengalee Muslims to these virgin areas; and the Assam Ministry has been conniving at their intrusion and the breaking down of the "Line System" set up as a protective measure for the local

Difficulties in
their way—case
of Assam

people. This story reveals the many forces of dispute and disruption that the Muslim League ideology has let loose over the country. Assam supplies an example and a warning of coming events. As a chronicler and interpreter of events and developments, we just indicate their tendency. Perhaps there are other forces, personal and impersonal, that have had their hand in pushing the people of this country into strifes and struggles that will test their strength and capacity—the real foundation stones of stable and virile national life.

The solution of the problem of India's independence, as proposed by the Muslim League, has been characterized as "terrible" by more than one observer of things Indian. Edward Thompson who was Principal of the Bankura college had occasion to meet the president of the League and found him prepared to face the dread situation that will be created.

**Other strands of
political thought
amongst Muslims**

In his speech as president of the annual session of the League held at Delhi during the last week of April (1943), he was cheered to the echo when he declared: "If we cannot secure power as a united India, then let us take it as a divided India." How this trick was to be done—this does not appear to have troubled him in this particular speech at least. From latter declarations he appears to think that the British Government would do the kindly thing by him and his community, and "divide and quit" India. It is not possible to argue with such a belief. There are, however, other schools of thought amongst our Muslim neighbours who feel that they could have "no interest in any scheme, the success of which depended on the assistance of the British," to quote from a resolution passed by the Council of the All-India Majlis-i-Ahrar almost about the same time. Another organization, the All-India Momin Conference, in its 8th annual session held at Delhi during those days of April (1943), came out strong for "the political unity and integrity of India." The president, Sheik Muhammad Zahiruddin, announced that their organization had decided to sever all connection with the Congress and the Muslim League. One reason for this step was that they were anxious "to give no semblance of justification for the charge that the Momins were working with the Congress to divide the Muslim community." He claimed that their organization represented 45 millions of Muslims "who are in the same position in the Muslim community as the depressed classes are among Hindus." The amelioration of these millions was only "possible under *Swaraj*"; their anxiety to have it quick was the inspiring motive of their "hurry to have *Swaraj*"; he appears to have reached the same conclusion that the majority of politically-minded people in India have done, that Hindu-Muslim unity can wait but *Swaraj* cannot; he expressed this thought thus: "about a political agreement between Hindus and Muslims we are not in such a hurry."

We have tried here to summarise the political thoughts that have been stirring in the Muslim community of India. Prof. Gurumukh Nihal Singh, President of the 5th annual session of the Indian Political Science Conference, appears to think that the question raised by the Muslim League has "passed beyond the realm of thought into the

**Mr. Jinnah's
stagey ways**

irrational zone of highly surcharged emotion." If this opinion can be trusted as a guide to political conduct, one can wait and let this frenzy pass. We know that the leadership of the League will not willingly allow their followers to think; they dare not call upon their members to make a realistic study of the problem of inter-communal relations in India. Mr. Jinnah who in his youth had made a name as an "actor" of Shakespeare's dramas has been using his gifts in the political stage. He prefaces and ends his speeches with abuse of Hindu public men and publicists. His Delhi speech contained the following sample :

"When we passed the Lahore resolution, we did not use the word Pakistan at all," Mr. Jinnah said. 'Who gave us this world? (Shouts of "Hindus"). Let me tell you this is their folly. They started damning this on the ground that it was Pakistan. They foisted this word upon us and they talked of Pan-Islamism. We ourselves went on for a long time using the phrase "the Lahore resolution popularly known as Pakistan. But how long are we to have this long phrase? I say to Hindu and British friends: We thank you for giving us one word".

This story is not true to the facts of recent developments in the political thoughts and activities of this country. The president

Post Iqbal's &
Rahmat Ali's
"Pakisthan"

of the Muslim League appears not to know the history of the idea which the "Pakisthan" cry represents. It is difficult to believe that he does not know that the late poet Iqbal used this word in course of his speech as President of an annual session of the Muslim League held at Allahabad; and how can he forget the pioneering work done in this line by Rahmat Ali whose activities find mention in Madame Helide Edib's book *Inside India*? She has quoted in her book the ideas and ideals that, according to Rahmat Ali, guide the Muslims: "Our religion, culture, history, tradition, literature, economic system, laws of inheritance, succession and marriage are fundamentally different from those of Hindus. They extend to the minute details of life." Rahamat Ali when he started his movement in 1933 laid the eastern boundary of his "Pakisthan" at the Jamuna; the territories that would form his State—the Punjab, Afghan Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan—are "not a part of India". History tells us that "although twelve hundred years ago there were Hindus and a Hindu Empire, since 712, for over a thousand years, they (the Hindus) have been a minority community there". The Muslim League leadership only varies the language in their assertion of the needs of "separate" States for Muslims, but the basic ideas are those that Rahmat Ali gave expression to a decade back. Since then Rahamat Ali appears to have extended his definition of "Pakisthan" in response to changed circumstances. He has, for instance, sketched the frame of "Osmanisthan" from out of the territories that form part of the Nizam State today, simply because the ruling family of the State happens to belong to the Muslim community, and the overwhelming majority of the population although Hindu appears to have had no place or say in the matter. Here the principle of majority rule on which the Lahore resolution was based has been given the go-by. Evidently neither the earliest protagonists of the "Pakisthan" idea nor the present enthusiasts for it are prepared to go by a principle, but must have the best of both the worlds. Human existence, however, does not provide for such

convenience for a long time. The history of their own community's life ought to have taught our Muslim neighbours this much wisdom in the present century at least, when for lesser principles States are being overturned. But experience is a dear school and the majority of us do learn in no other.

Other separatist conceits & ambitions

Muslim League leadership has been exciting for its own purposes many of the minority elements in the country. Those of us who have had experience of the mutations of political life and activities in India cannot but watch with a certain amount of amusement the companionate relation that appears to have grown up between, for instance, the Muslim League and the group of south Indian politicians and publicists whose guide and philosopher is Mr. Ramaswami Naicker. These gentlemen have come forward with the claim that they must have their "Dravida-sthan" where pre-Aryan culture and civilisation, now withering under adverse Aryan domination, must have room for a fresh flowering. The leader of this group has declared that if he cannot have his "Dravida-sthan" he will embrace Islam and on the strength of this new affiliation carve out a new "sthan"—not certainly "Dravida-sthan"—if the culture for which the Muslim League stands has any meaning and significance. We do not know how Mr. Rajagopalachari and his followers have been reacting to this demand of Mr. Ramaswami Naicker and his followers. The "separateness" of Dravida culture from the Aryan is a proposition that is as valid as that for which the Muslim League threatens to divide the country. History, now-forgotten history at least, can be brought out to find reasons in support and defence of this particular thesis. Dr. Ambedkar's group of "scheduled castes", spread over the whole of India, has put in claims for their "separate" States. To give shape to these, vast exchange of population will have to be undertaken to bring the dispersed "depressed" classes into sizeable States. The Sikhs will have their chunk of Punjab territory which contains all the sacred places of their religion, and is the homeland of their short but glorious history. It is possible that other groups have been dreaming their dreams and seeing their visions which require but a little encouragement from the British authorities to come into the light of day. The credal States of which we have given samples here do not, however, complete the tale of India's experiment with State-making. There are linguistic nationalisms such as Assamese, Maithil, Tamil, Telegu, Canarese, to take a few instances only, which have already put in their claims for the apportionment of a "local habitation and a name." These also cannot be denied. Some of these claims would be cutting across one another; at least these cannot be accommodated in the schemes of credal States that has been the reply of the Muslim League to the needs of modern life.

Against historic development

It has been urged that the innumerable number of States in India that will evolve if the separatist conceits and ambitions of all are to be satisfied need not stand as a barrier to the freedom of each one of them. But this can only be a half-way house. For, in this world of national greed and competition where the defence of terri-

torial integrity has become a difficult task even for such an empire as Britain's, when regional groupings demanding the sacrifice of ideas of sovereign independence are thought to be the pattern of coming State-organizations, at a time like this to seek to divide into tiny bits the geographical entity and unity that India has been throughout the centuries may be going against the forces of historical developments. This can be denied only at the peril of more valuable interests.

These are long-range views. Meanwhile the Indian scene is being disfigured by controversies that has been holding up the progress of the country not only politically but economically and socially

**For capture of
political power**

in its widest sense embracing every department of the people's life. Even in the matter of famine in

Bengal candid friends from other parts of India have been found to give expression to the opinion that it came to be so incompetently handled because the Muslim League party which was the official Opposition in the Bengal Legislature during the opening phases of this famine made it into a "sport of politics"; the European party which held the balance in the party grouping lent a hand to this game for reasons of their own wholly unconnected with this threat to the lives of millions. This callousness has become possible because we have learnt to regard the little of political power that has been yielded by the British as a stepping-stone to the advance of personal and group interests. The representatives of the Indian National Congress have been regarded by many in this country as queerly unrealistic or idealistic when they gave up the Ministries in eight out of the eleven provinces of India where the 1935 Act had been functioning. Leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha who regard the threat held by the Muslim League to the unity of the country as of more immediate concern than settling accounts with the British bureaucracy have roundly condemned the Congress for resigning the power that it had gained by beating in the elections all the political parties combined against it, and thus selling the pass to the enemies of the country, foreign and native. The resignation by the Congress Ministries have enabled the bureaucracy to tempt politicians and careerists with seats of power. And the majority of them have fallen into the trap. Muslim League politicians have taken full advantage of this opportunity not because they love the British chains, but because they feel that this power will enable them to consolidate their power and work towards the establishment of the "Pakisthan" of their dreams. During the Delhi annual session of the Muslim League held during the last week of April, 1943, Muslim League politicians were found crowing with the anticipated glory of their party and the victory of their programme. Chowdhury Khaliquzzaman of Lucknow who has developed in him a Sudetan German mind made no secret of the ways in which his party would be disintegrating the activities of the Central Government, weakening its hold over the provincial administrations, and in the resultant confusion lay the foundations of "Pakisthan" in the areas where the Muslim League party dominated the Ministries. And, if fortune favoured their efforts in this behalf they will regain the political power over the whole of India that had slipped from the hands of the descendants of Babar. It is useless to argue with sentiments and hopes like these. There are other dreamers and visionaries who have

their own particularistic schemes for the capture of political power in India. All of them do not belong to what has come to be known as British India.

These developments lie in the womb of the future. In the immediate present British policy has seen to it that the people do war work driven thereto by hunger, that they do not interfere with war activities in which their higher impulses cannot be enlisted owing to reasons well understood all over the world. The manner in which Lord Linlithgow was allowed to handle the policy raised by Gandhiji's fast of 21-days showed that the ruling authorities did not feel the necessity of full-hearted Indian support in their fight for existence. Other leaders of the "United Nations", except the Chinese, have accepted this British interpretation of the situation in this country. Of course, they must have fretted when the sabotage and incendiarism of the latter half of 1942 threatened to disrupt the organisations for offense against Japan that the British and United States Governments were building up in this country. But the suppression of these subversive activities has removed their fears—fears that often quicken human conscience. Another argument for the continuance of the British arrangements was supplied by the quiet way in which the people have been paying the mounting expenses imposed on them by the Finance Member of Lord Linlithgow's Government. This quietness may have led to paths to the grave. But that has not deflected State policy in India. In direct and indirect ways, more through the latter, Sir Jeremy Raisman has been squeezing out of the people the crores required to carry on Britain's war of survival as an imperialist Power. The railway budget will illustrate this method of exploitation. Since 1936 railway rates and fares have been increased four times. They have a depreciation fund in the railways which requires Rs. 8½ crores a year, but they put in it Rs. 12 crores every year. They have also a reserve fund in which they have been able to put in Rs. 84 crores. All these monies come from rates and fares; they are much in excess of what is required for the proper running of the railways. In the coming year it has been estimated that they will have a surplus of Rs. 36 crores, out of which Rs. 27 crores will go to the general revenues according to the convention of 1924, Rs. 9 crores going into the reserve fund. It has not been thought desirable that out of this huge profit something can or should be set apart for the relief of rates and fares. The member in charge of the railways has not in reply to these criticisms cared to justify this technique of exploitation. He tried to make much of the theory that the railways were a public utility concern, concerned not with profit but with service to the public. But in practice it has been the other way about.

This exploitation has been pressing hard on the people, a proof of which has been afforded by the famine conditions that have become a feature of India's participation in a war that was to secure "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" to the commonalty of the world. Controversy with regard to the responsibility for this state of affairs has become, perhaps, by the time we write these lines irrelevant.

**Financial exploit-
ation of poor
people**

**India's
defence
expenditure**

During the winter session (1943) of the Central Legislature other items of controversy erupted into attention as the Finance Member presented his demands and the various financial commitments undertaken on behalf of the Indian people by the British administration. For as long a time as the beginning of British connection with this country the non-Indian bias of the Government has left no choice to the subject population but to look with suspicion on the financial arrangements made by the British bureaucracy that in theory carries on the administration on behalf and for the benefit of the British people. Specially is this so when Indian men and Indian money are being used for fighting Britain's war. The feeling has been that India has always been a loser by these transactions; by some financial jugglery that is hard to trace Britain walks away leaving Indian pockets lighter. During the last World War such a thing was suspected to have happened; and people mockingly ask today whether or not a repetition of the same experience was being staged by the India Office under Mr. Leopold Amery and the Delhi-Simla bureaucracy under Lord Linlithgow as part of recompense for the use of India's resources in the present World War. Sir Jeremy Raisman presented a picture of Britain's generosity in bearing a large part of the war expenses in and about India as reflected in the settlement of November, 1943. Under it India has to pay: (a) her pre-war normal budget for effective charges of about Rs. 36.77 crores; (b) a sum in adjustment of the normal budget for rise in prices; (c) the cost of 'Indian war measures', that is, such war measures as can be regarded as purely Indian liabilities by reason of their having been undertaken by India in her own interests; (d) a contribution towards the additional costs of her external defence. India has paid a lump sum of Rs. 1 crore on this account. "His Majesty's Government is to pay for the remainder of all general defence and supply expenditure incurred by India, subject to separate post-war negotiations concerning the liability for surplus war stores in India acquired in the common interest. Non-effective charges were to be dealt with separately." It cannot be expected that a lay man would understand the technicalities of this arrangement. And the Finance Member sought to illustrate the implications of these in the following words:

"Expenditure on Supply in its widest sense—the production of guns, ammunition, armoured cars, clothing and war-like stores of every description (some 60,000 items) was so closely related to direct defence expenditure that it also was covered by the Financial Settlement. The arrangement was broadly speaking the same: India pays for whatever she takes from Indian production for Indian war measures, and for her share of joint war measures, including storage charges, and His Majesty's Government pays for, and owns, all the remaining stores produced, together with practically all the capital assets created for the purpose of expending production and storage."

In the absence of detailed explanations in this behalf it is difficult to estimate the charges that will ultimately fall on the Indian exchequer, though Sir Jeremy emphasised "the importance of avoiding the meticulous calculations, arguments and adjustments which gave rise to such endless trouble and confusion in the last war". Even the lay man sees that there are loop-holes in the Financial Settlement and its wording that will be creating troubles when the accounts come to be squared. This is a subject in which India does not expect to receive

fair dealing, owing to the unnatural relation that subsists between her and Britain. Speeches of loyalists even during the last winter session of the Central Legislature voiced such a fear. Connected with this is the huge amount of purchases being made on behalf of Britain in this country on account. A great part of the value of these transactions has been paid for by the liquidation of a part of the public debt of India held in sterling, by the sale of railway annuities held in Britain. The remaining totalled about Rs. 460 crores in the second week of 1943. An estimate says that India's sterling credit have been increasing at the rate of Rs. 20 crores every month. Concern is being naturally felt in this country for the proper utilization of these "sterling balances". The Finance Member disclosed the ways in which they proposed to get paid. One was the funding of yearly payments in sterling of about 5 to 6 millions a year on account of pensions, family pensions and provident funds. Another is a Reconstruction Fund made out of the "sterling balances", to be kept in London, "to provide for the financing of a programme of post-war reconstruction, including the rehabilitation and re-equipment of industries." Both these proposals are being regarded with "suspicion and disapproval", to quote the words of the Finance Secretary. The first proposal—"the advance provision of remittance for sterling pensionary liabilities"—is regarded as a pointer to the lack of confidence on the part of the British authorities in the willingness or ability of the "self-governing India" to meet these liabilities. Bitterness is being felt that the British authorities somehow getting control over certain Indian resources should refuse to allow India to use these as she desired, to withhold payment of these on one excuse or other. The Reconstruction Fund proposal is also not looked upon with favour because it is believed that it will bind India to buy her requirements of "capital goods"—machineries and other equipments for modern industrialism—from Britain, from the "sterling area". Sir Jeremy Raisman indicated the nature of these requirements: "in the post-war period India will have heavy demands for imported machinery and plant to equip her greatly extended industrial system, to re-equip her railways and to enable Provincial and State Governments to carry out schemes of electrification, irrigation and the like, which have had to remain in abeyance during the war". He also indicated the source from which India could get these things—"apart from their being available as a reserve wherewith to pay for the capital goods which the United Kingdom will be in a position to supply for India's industrial expansion and the replacement of machinery...", this fund will "enable India to trade as one of the principal commercial countries of the world and play a helpful part in building a system of international trade such as would ensure a fair market for goods of export". In theory the proposal made here may have points to recommend it for acceptance. But from her experience of British handling of her resources during two centuries of their relationship, any move, however well-intentioned, on the part of Britain for the benefit of India is watched with suspicion and distrust. This must be a permanent factor so long as Britain does not end this unnatural state of things, this unfortunate feeling, this "spiritual alienation", will remain as a festering sore to embitter the whole system of Indo-British interests, and even that

envisaged in the "United Nations". That poison has already begun to work as those who have got inside knowledge and psychological understanding of the mind of India as it has been reacting to the many developments that have been laying the foundation of the new world as it will be emerging out of the fires and ruins of the present war.

This brings us to the handling of the political situation in India in which both the rulers and the ruled have reached a blind alley.

Mr. Jinnah's
invitation to
Gandhiji

Apathy and resentment characterise the conduct of the ruled, while Churchillian arrogance struts in the world's stage as the quality needed to win the war and win the peace that was to follow this war. A

United States observer has reported that the head of the British bureaucracy in India confessed that his country was never more unpopular in this country than it was at that time. Delhi-Simla observers have reported that other members of this bureaucracy share the same feeling but they know not how to change this state of affairs and are reconciled to carrying on in the accustomed way, however distasteful the duty may be, and ultimately unsuccessful it may prove to be. The mind of the British Government stood revealed in all its nakedness during those anxious days—21 days—of February, 1943, when Mahatma Gandhi had undertaken his "capacity fast". Men of good will all the world over were stirred into appealing to the "civilised conscience" of Britain for doing the decent and generous thing to an "enemy" that fought them without malice and anger, that has ever been trying to raise politics to a plane where guns and airplanes had no place. The Archbishop of Canterbury had appealed to his Government to rise equal to the occasion, to help remove the tension that has been standing in the way of constructive work in India and enlist India's full-hearted help in solving the many problems that face a war-scarred world. Gandhiji survived the test, but there was no lifting of the clouds from over the Indo-British scene. The world might heave a sigh of relief but felt all the same that the British Government has failed the test of humanity, to put the matter in its most rudimentary implication. Another opportunity came to them to rectify when Gandhiji sent a letter addressed to Mr. Jinnah, to be re-directed to him. This letter was in response to the invitation that Mr. Jinnah had extended to Gandhiji in course of his speech as President of the annual session of the Muslim League held in the last week of April, 1943. The Government of Lord Linlithgow, however, refused to transmit this letter. The world does not know the contents of this letter, and can only surmise that Gandhiji wanted to meet Mr. Jinnah to discuss matters political with him, to find a way out of the deadlock. The words that Mr. Jinnah had used in his impromptu invitation as it appeared in the Press on May 26 when it gained importance by an act of Lord Linlithgow's,

"Nobody would welcome it more than myself if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Let me tell you that it will be the greatest day both for the Hindus and Mussalmans. If he has made up his mind what is their to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me? He is writing letters to the Viceroy. Why does he not write to me direct? Who is there that can prevent him from doing so? What is

the use of going to the Viceroy and leading deputations and carrying on correspondence? Who is to prevent Mr. Gandhi to-day? I cannot believe for a single moment—strong as this Government may be in this country you may say anything you like against this Government—I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. It will be a very serious thing indeed if such a thing is done by the Government. But I do not see evidence of any kind of change of policy on the part of Mr. Gandhi or Congress or the Hindu leadership”.

For a little while Lord Linlithgow’s “daring” to do what Mr. Jinnah expected him not to do appeared to have created a “serious thing”, putting to test the attitudinizing of the President of the Muslim League. Important members of the Muslim League talked of this as a “challenge” to their importance and prestige as the second largest political party in India. But the “situation” subsided as Mr. Jinnah refused to make good the challenging words that he had uttered in April, a month back only. The excuses that he came forward with were two: that he had been mis-reported, that he did not use the words exactly as these appeared in the Press; that the purpose of Gandhiji’s letter was not what it seemed, seeking reconciliation with the Muslim League by, accepting its “Pakisthan” demand; the real purpose was to “embroil” him and his organization in a quarrel with the British authorities. One can speculate cruelly on the lesson of this episode. But we do not propose to do so. We would rather interpret it as another proof that public life in India was not strong enough to assert its will and brush aside the opposition of an irresponsible bureaucracy. It proves the hollowness of the plea that British Government was anxious to receive a united demand on the part of the various elements of the country. This was another proof that it refused to facilitate the quickening of conditions favourable to the evolution of a united demand and agreed formula for the solution of the Indian problem. World developments have favoured the pursuit of this policy of negation, of the denial to the Indian people the satisfaction of the deepest of human desires—the desire for national freedom which is national self-respect.

In these favourable developments Soviet Russia played the most heroic and significant part by throwing back the German hordes from the heart of Caucasia almost. The miracle that was worked at Stalingrad did not prepare the world for all that has happened since February, 1943. A Japanese announcer had said on February 8: “The German Sixth Army has suffered dire defeat at Stalingrad, a defeat unprecedented in German history.....German troops surrendered on February 6.” In the halo of glory that victories gained since then has surrounded the *Rodina* (Motherland) of the Russians we are apt to lose sight of the sacrifices, sufferings and organisations that have snatched these from the hands of the most competent military machine that the world has seen during modern times. Mr. Wendell Willkie has reported what he saw during his trip to Russia at the end of 1942: “Clothing nearly gone.....Children work in many of the shops the full 66-hour week worked by adults..... The only food that could be bought in the markets was black

Mr. Jinnah
backs out

“Die, but do not
retreat

bread and potatoes at exorbitant prices." This report gives but a faint idea of the "food front" as it is being maintained in the Soviet land. But these give an idea of the endurance that have enabled the Soviet people to respond to Marshal Stalin's slogan—*Umerai te No Ne Otstu paite* (Die, But Do Not Retreat). The procession of victories that has passed through the whole year of 1943 without any serious interruption has demonstrated the "magnificent will to resist of the Russian people—who had as much claim to glory as the British people had when they withstood the *blitz* of 1940." For as long as human history will last these achievements will shine as examples to all liberty-loving people.

But to understand the magnificence of this record we have to place it against the background of what their chiefest enemy—Germany—achieved during the first twenty months of the Russo-German war. An appreciation of the situation by Lord Beaverbrook, a member of the Churchill Ministry, made on February 3, 1943, can be relied on to give not too favourable an estimate of the German position.

"There is a great deal to be said from the German point of view. In the first place, the German line is practically the same as it was a year ago—practically the same as it was on January 1, 1942—for the bridge-heads held by the Germans at that time are still in their possession with the exception of the two in the north, and these losses are countered to some extent by one additional bridge-head held in the south. We have heard about the relief of Leningrad, but that relief has not succeeded in re-establishing the railway from Leningrad to Moscow You cannot regard Leningrad as relieved until that direct line to Moscow has been recovered by the Russians. Then again the Germans may be "shortening their line....."

A year hence since those words were uttered Nazi Germany's adventure in Russia has suffered unbelievable defeats. As we write (January, 1944), almost three-fourths of the territories that had passed under the invaders and remained so for more than twenty months have been recovered. This goes beyond the strategy of "shorter lines" to which Lord Beaverbrook referred. The loss of the areas round about the Grozny oil field in the heart of the Caucasian Republic, the utmost limit of the German lines in the south, has not halted the German retreat. In quick succession Rostov, Orel, Gomel, Kharkov, Kursk and Kiev have been lost in this front. The loss of Smolensk, greatest base in Russia of the Nazi invaders in the central sector, maintains the Russian pressure. In the north the same uniform story of victories brings a message of hope to the vanquished peoples of Europe under Nazi heels. But these do not support the facile generalisation that the "German defensive in Russia and Italy has lacked background". The more than six months of retreats and defeats forced on the German army in Russia have a plan to tell on the side of the retreating and defeated forces. To understand all the mazes of this strategy we have to depend on military commentators belonging to the principal warring nations. General Dietmar, official spokesman of the German High Command, in course of a nation-wide broadcast in the first week of June, 1943, sought to bring out the ideas that ruled the then tactics of the military leaders of the Nazi Reich.

"Our enemies declare that the time for offensive warfare is over so far as we are concerned, and that the initiative has definitely passed to them. The question of

What the German
forces achieved

What they learnt
from the
Russians

who is able to attack is less important at the present time than the question of who is forced to attack. Those who must attack are our opponents, not ourselves.

Previously we had to conduct *blitzkriegs* (lightning warfare) in order to win the space which now serves us so well.

Clausewitz says that the defensive is the stronger weapon of the two. His words about the advantage in war which springs from possession fully applies to our present position.

A United States commentator made the following point in the second week of January, 1943 :

"For the Russian front is now, in many respects, similar to the Pacific front :
 German forces the Germans were pocketed in a series of 'islands' where
 "Islanded" the beleaguered armies could survive only as long
 in Russia as they were supplied from centres many miles away..."

"The vast reserves of men and weapons available for the Red Army's winter offensive showed that the retreats of last summer and fall had been triumphs of military thrift. Stalin and the Red Army Command had sacrificed Russian cities, resources and territory rather than risk the Soviet reserves."

In the second week of March, 1943, a report in the New York weekly—*Time*—said :—

"Strategically, the Russian victories last week were as big as any that have
 First half of 1943 been won in the entire winter offensive... But comparatively
 shows German few troops were killed or captured. This suggested that
 stability the Germans had previously withdrawn the bulk of their forces,
 and that they were still shortening the line, sacrificing precious
 geography to save their armies."

"The net strategic effect has been to leave the Germans on something very like the same line from which they started a year ago, except that they now hold all Crimea and the Novorosijsk bridge-head. The Rzhev salient was reduced and the Leningrad siege lifted, but the hoped-for offensive eating into the Baltic States had not been realised." (*Time*, April 10, 1943.)

"It appeared that the Germans had sacrificed land in favour of men, and that the Russian winter campaign had done more to destroy Hitler's prestige than to destroy Hitler's force."—(*Time*, April 10, 1943.)

Since then, within eight months, Russian forces have been eating into the Baltic States, into Poland, and has been able to maintain a full
 The food front offensive without haste and without rest, either to
 in the Soviet themselves or to the enemy. The picture that
 land emerged out at the end of June, 1943, the events
 and developments during which form the subject

matter of the present study, can be summarized from the Press. Each army had the same problem : to hold a 2,000-mile front with sufficient forces, with handy reserves to deploy into chosen limited offensives. The Germans had 190 divisions in their eastern front, their allies contributing another 28 divisions. They were outnumbered by the Russians. This superiority forced on the Germans a defensive strategy or a "limited offensive". The German High Command began to prepare the minds of their people for this change in their conceptions of war when they allowed their commentator to say : "We started this war with different conceptions from those we hold now. Many illusions were shattered.....We realize that such an adversary cannot be knocked out with one blow." We have seen suggestions that regarded German confessions like these to be a feint and a snare. "The Germans would like nothing better than to make the world believe that their defensive strategy in Russia automatically means the defeat of the *Wehrmacht* in Russia." But the realists at the Kremlin have not been taken in by German

confessions of a sort of defeat. They know that in their two winters of war they were not able to crush the German forces : that the Red Army alone cannot do it. Thus the position is being reduced to a "race between two processes of attrition." The Russians cannot like this position, as they are being worried "probably over food."

For all its brave bragging to the world the U. S. S. R. has never recovered completely from the loss of the Ukraine's grain fields. Belated rains in Central Russia last week (last week of June) improved the uncertain crop prospects, but at the best a severe food shortage will continue. Vast but often badly-tilled new acreages plus Lend-Lease shipments have not filled the shortage or ended the drain on the U. S. S. R.'s dwindling grain reserves. The result is that only the Red Army, a few foreigners and higher officials are tolerably well-fed in Russia. The rest exist and labour at a level of bare subsistence."

This report appeared on the 5th of July, 1943 in the New York weekly we have already quoted from. It explained why the rulers of

**Germany
shortening
her lines**

Russia have been pressing so urgently and insistently on their western allies for the opening out of a "second front". Their idea of a "second front" had been that 60 Axis divisions would be withdrawn from Russia to meet the Allied offensive on western or southern Europe. It is true that in November, 1942, when the Anglo-American offensive started in north-west Africa, Marshal Stalin had declared that for "the first time in this war a blow at the enemy from the east by the Red Army merged with a blow from the west delivered by the armies of our allies in a single united blow". But the rigid Russian definition of a "second front" does not appear to have been satisfied even by the subsequent events in north Africa where only 15 Axis divisions could be put out of action, in Sicily and in the mainland of Italy. This becomes evident from what appeared in the *Pravda* (Truth) when it contradicted a London report that 50 German divisions had been transferred from the Russian front. In doing so the Soviet paper said that "211 German divisions are now on the German-Soviet front and no withdrawals from that front are taking place"; it also referred to the disposal of the German forces in other parts of Europe—91 divisions, including not more than 20 in Germany and Austria, 35 in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. At the time we write these lines, many more German divisions must have been withdrawn from the eastern front that had been pushed inside Russian territory by Germany during the first 20 months of her war in eastern Europe.

Germany has been "shortening her front"—these words have been appearing in the Press of the world since the Stalingrad disaster overtook her. Within a year she has been able to shorten her lines to about 700 to 1000 miles. This tactics has enabled her to withdraw about

**And using per
"released" divisions
in "Fortress
Europe"**

100 divisions from her eastern front. An estimate we have seen, embodying a detailed study of the problem, helps us to understand the motives, certain of the motives, that have been guiding German strategy in this matter. It has been found that the German High Command had employed a division of about 12,000 thousand strong in every 10 miles of the Russo-German front, that is, a soldier in every 2 yards of it; this estimate has been based on the employment of about 225 divisions in a front of 2,300 miles. The front that the German

military leaders have been able to shorten in course of the year 1943 is understood to be not more than 800 miles. This policy has been forced on her partly, if not mainly, by the strength and violence of the Russian attack, and partly by apprehension of the Allied invasion of her "Fortress Europe". This short line can be held by 90 divisions, thus making a saving of a little over 100 divisions. The forces thus released and relieved from the Russian front are likely to be employed in the manner indicated below: 50 divisions in Italy instead of the present strength of 22 divisions; 50 divisions in the Balkans instead of the 22 stationed there at present; 70 divisions in France, Belgium and Holland in place of the 40 dispersed throughout this vast area. This estimate also secures to the German High Command about 30 divisions for use in emergencies to be rushed to threatened points. The movement of this "mobile strategic reserve" is easier for the Axis Powers owing to the possession of what have been called "interior lines"—the railways and motorized roads which Todt, Speer, and other German engineers have brought to such perfection. Munich, Vienna, Dresden and Prague form centres and key-points of this co-ordination of the movements of vast armies. In the eastern front Germany will consolidate her position in the hills of the Carpathian range, while holding the northern section of it in "defence in depth" through the lavish use of concrete structures—the whole front in a straight line north and south from Piga to Odessa. This "type-writer strategy" has this value, that it enables the general reader to understand the meaning of the world-shaking events happening in Europe.

But to fully understand these German moves and counter-moves, we have to turn to the activities of the Allied powers, chiefly the United States, Britain and "Free France." The year 1943 opened for the Allied Powers with hopes of ultimate victory; these have remained undimmed and have brightened as the war drama has been evolving before our very eyes. The north African campaign was limping forward to success, owing to weather difficulties, the rainy season lasting through February, sometimes into April. The forces that the United States had ferried over were "green", and they suffered one or two major set-backs that irritated feeling in that country. The British 8th Army had to come as "relief" to them. U. S. A. correspondents sent home dark hints that "the going would be tough and probably long, before we have cleaned up Africa and are ready to move to bigger fronts." But at the end of six months the Anglo-American armies did move into the bigger front of Sicily, finishing the Tunisian job by the end of May 1943, exactly to the day when six months ago they had started their campaign in north-west Africa. The mystery of the break-up of the Axis morale in this front has yet to be explained. It appears that in the last phases of this war the Italian forces gave a better account of themselves than their German comrades. It has yet to be explained why Pantalleria and Sicily did not show a better record than Malta which for two years had stood the assaults of German bombers and of the Italian Navy. For about three years Malta had lain open to attacks by sea and air; its importance could not be unknown to the Axis High Command:

Allied victories
during January—
June 1943

its overthrow would have enabled German and Italian forces to move freely through the Mediterranean, to drive the Allies from Africa. Sicily occupied the same position so far as the defence of the Italian mainland was concerned, and was part of the defensive armour of the "Fortress Europe" that Germany had been able to build up.

The fall of Sicily has brought nearer the day when this Fortress could be assaulted either through the south of France and Italy or through the Aegean Sea and the Balkan areas. The Allied talk about successful issue of the Tunisian campaign, and the invasion of Europe opening of the Italian campaign are seen to be linked together. The Allied Powers could then loudly think of an invasion of the continent. A London *Daily Mail* correspondent had called the victory in Tunisia as "fantastic"; but that did not detract anything from its importance, as it enabled Allied strategists to indicate the lines on which they could move towards the heart of the "Fortress Europe" from the south. They could talk of the "key-point in mid-European strategy" lying on "the Middle Danube" which could be reached "from Northern Italy"; they could talk of Vienna, standing at one of the cross-roads of Europe, being linked with Trieste on the Adriatic by "main railway"; hostile armies striking at the heart of the continent "along the valleys of the Danube and the Elbe"; they could talk of going up into Poland "through the Moravian gap"; they could talk of Budapest in the south-east that commanded the "great Hungarian Plain".

But all these have remained in the region of speculations. Except Russia none of the European and American Allies have been able to make any sizeable inroad into this "Fortress"; the fall of Signior Mussolini and the setting up of a pro-Ally Government in Italy have not removed the obstacles in the path of this strategy. We do not know the strength of the help that Marshal Badoglio has been able to bring to the Anglo-American invasion armies; we do not know the strength of the regime that Signior Mussolini has been able to set up under the name of "democratic Fascism". But we are face to face with the fact that for more than six months the German forces, helped by a remnant of the Italian armies, have been able to hold back the Allied invasion attempts, and confine these to the south of Rome. The loud-voiced claims that the Mediterranean has been made free, that the Adriatic has become some sort of an Allied lake had not been made good. In the eastern Mediterranean Allied attacks on the Dodecanese Islands have been beaten back; these, and Rhodes, Scarpanto and Crete guard the Balkans Peninsula, denying to the Allies opportunity to attack at any point either in Greece or in Yugoslavia where guerrilla bands and under-ground organisations have been active trying to disrupt the grip of the Axis Powers. These are factors on the debit side of the Allied Powers which have to be kept in mind in judging the situation in southern Europe. The minimising of difficulties is no help either to morale or to practical measures. It is not possible for us to get to know all the facts that have been halting Allied offensive in Italy and further north, east or west. An explanatory note to a map of the north Mediter-

anean area connected with these operations says that German Labour Commissioner Fritz Sauckel, has demanded the conscription of 1,50,000 Frenchmen "to work on the *Mittelmeerwall* (Mediterranean Wall), the defensive fortifications that are supposed to extend from Spain to Alexandroupolis near the border of Turkey."

This picture is relieved by what British and the United States air forces have been able to do in wrecking German war industries.

Germany's central position—a great advantage

But the plan appears to be bigger than these bombings indicate. And this plan is made plain to us by what the leader of the "Free French", General de Gaulle, is reported to have said in November, 1942. "The land of France has become the strategical centre of the western war." Oliver Stewart, editor of the *Aeronautics* (London) in elaborating this dictum has said: "the problem of the United Nations consists in bringing to bear upon certain points in the large circumference that has France for its centre an air force which is capable of breaking through, or at any rate of preparing the way for a break-through." This comment weakens the idea that air attacks alone can win wars; "strategical bombing might be partially wasted if it were directed against an objective which could not be subsequently assailed by land or sea forces." This is, however, a side issue. The main point suggested by General de Gaulle—"there is no body with a keener strategical sense than this Frenchman"—is further analysed by the writer:

"There are two concentric circles which have their centres in France—the defensive air circle of the Axis and, just outside it, the offensive air circle of the United Nations. The very fact that the United Nations were exercising their air power centripetally implies that their problems of supply were greater than those of the Axis. But their output was also greater, so that in consequence they were able in some measure to overcome their positional handicaps by mass.....they were able to overcome these difficulties by the ingenious use of the long-range capabilities of some of their machines."

Here we get a fuller picture of the war situation as it affected the Allied Powers in their war against Germany. This study

Air bombings on Germany—an "experiment"

explains the many difficulties that stand in the way of an all-out invasion of Germany's "Fortress Europe"—*Festung Europa*. It explains why the weight of bomb tons thrown on it by British and United States bombers have not been able in course of twelve months. (1943) to disrupt her war activities. The report of the damages caused in Germany makes quite impressively horrifying reading. In January 6,000 tons were rained on key positions and places in Germany; in February 10,000 tons; in March 6,000 tons; in April 11,000 tons; in May 12,500 tons; in June 19,000 tons (1 ton is equal to about 27 maunds). The list of places bombed during the period—11th June to 28th June—in Germany, France and Italy by the British bombers gives us an idea of the vastness of the operations—Dusseldorf—Muenster; Bochum; Oberhausen; Cologne; Le Cruesot (France), Friedrichshafen; Krefeld; Muelheim; Spezia (Italy); Wuppertal; Bochum—Gelsenkirchen; North-West Germany: Cologne. During almost the same period the U. S. A. air force stationed in Britain bombed the following places: Wilhelmshaven; Cuxhaven; Bremen; Kial; Huels (Belgium); Antwerp; North-West Germany; French air fields; St.

Nazaire (France) ; Beaumont-le-Roger ; Le Mans (France). The damage caused to the war potential of Germany is not possible to estimate with accuracy. It has been reported that damage to the Rhenish-Westphalia area centering around the Ruhr has suffered a 35 per cent drop in production, accounting for a 10 per cent drop throughout the whole of the Reich. What the Ruhr stands for in the industrial life of the country is indicated by the following figures : Germany gets 67 per cent of her hard coal from this region ; 80 per cent of her coke ; 60 per cent of her pig iron ; and 60 per cent of her special steels. Under threat of bombs she might disperse her industrial plants all over the Reich, beyond the range of Anglo-American bombers ; but coal and iron mines, and certain parts of the industrial plants cannot be removed. There is no doubt that great hopes were built on these bombings as wrecking German moral and German industrial plants that supply the armies in the fields with instruments and implements of war. The Prime Minister of Britain in his speech made to the United States Congress on May 19, 1943 recommended this air war as "an experiment worth trying as long as other measures were not excluded". He acknowledged that "opinion was divided as to whether air power alone could lead to collapse in Germany and Italy."

The experience since then, during about seven or eight months, with 1000-bomber attacks, has not upheld these hopes. The question

How effective in destruction has also been raised whether these bombings are as effective in destruction as these have been represented to be. Prof. Sidney Fay of Harvard University (U. S. A.) has raised the question thus : "To read the

British official accounts of the first mass raid on Cologne in May, 1942, one would conclude that this first-class industrial city and rail centre had suffered an irreparable blow. But one wonders. If the damage was as great as implied, why should it be necessary to attack it again and again in 1943 with repeated mass raids : 1,000 tons dropped on June 16, 1,500 on June 28, 1,000 on July 3, and again more than 1,000 on July 8 ? This last raid was actually the 119th air attack on Cologne since the war began." Prof. Fay is a supporter of the plan to bomb the Axis Powers into submission. And in his article he has accumulated almost all the evidence of the destruction caused. He made special mention of the blasting of the "largest reservoir dams in the Reich"—the Moehne Dam being 2,407 ft. long and 122 ft. high, and Eder Dam 1,312 ft. long and 134 ft. high—on May 16, 1943. Photographs showed that the currents suddenly released drowned 4,000 people and rendered 1,50,000 men, women and children homeless, submerging roads, silting electrical plants, destroying bridges, railway plants and road beds. Since then the tempo of air attacks on Germany has been raised higher. But signs of a collapse have not made their appearance.

Thus we have been left in the region of speculations as far as invasion of the continent of Europe by the Allies was concerned. In the beginning of 1943, the President of the United States took the unprecedented step of leaving the country and meeting the British Prime Minister at Casablanca in north-west Africa across 2,000 miles

Priority of attack on Germany

of Atlantic waters ; here they have been represented as having devised an offensive that would result in the "unconditional surrender" of the Axis Powers. Radios have sought to drive home into the minds of peoples of Europe that deliverance was near at hand, that the leaders of the "United Nations" had determined that their enemies should "unconditionally surrender," and that this declaration should be a spur to them to rise against the invaders. In the middle of May they again met, this time at Washington, to discuss and evaluate the progress of events. Into this conference came Sir Archibald Wavell, commander-in-chief and two other commanders from India. It appears from Mr. Churchill's speech to the U. S. A. Congress that the difficulties of carrying on the war against Japan from India with a view to bring "aid to hard-pressed and long-tormented China" were threshed out in "friendly candour". The British Prime Minister gave assurance on behalf of his Government that as soon as they were relieved of the war in Europe by the "unconditional surrender" of the European Axis Powers and their allies, the whole offensive strength of the British people would be directed to the Far East. This follows the time-table that the President and the Prime Minister and their "high expert advisers" had decided in January, 1943, that Germany would have priority of attack and defeat—that "while the defeat of Japan would not mean the defeat of Germany, the defeat of Germany would infallibly mean the ruin of Japan".

Mr. Churchill felt constrained to give this explanation because he knew that a "substantial segment of American opinion" felt that the U. S. A. should turn its "chief present energies against the Jap". We summarise from the New York *Time* the many influences that were giving point to this argument. Geography, old hates and fears, and

**Mr. Churchill
tries to justify
this strategy**

honest military opinion unite the diverse groups which believe the defeat of Japan more urgent and more important than the defeat of Germany. The West Coast faced the Orient. Isolationists still nourished their conviction that the U. S. had no business in "Europe's messes"; still argued "privately" that Japan was the only one that had attacked them. And "a considerable number of sense-making military officers and civilian observers believe and can show that Japan is more dangerous than many Americans realise." A U. S. Senator appears to have given voice to these "collective sentiments" at a meeting of the Senate which forced Mr. Churchill to enter into the argument. Senator Chandler had argued his points thus : (1) Japan may become unbeatable if given time to consolidate its vast territorial conquests : (2) China may soon be forced to drop out of the war unless given substantial help : (3) Britain and Russia are both likely to drop out of the war as soon as Germany is finished, leaving the U. S. to fight Japan alone : (4) in that case, the U. S. will be helpless to intervene as its former Allies divide up the world at the peace conference : (5) the failure of Britain's 20,00,000-man army in India to oust 60,000 Japs from Burma already indicates Britain's lack of determination. It is reported that none in the Senate could or cared to refute the arguments of Senator Chandler. And Mr. Churchill had to take up the task, and give the assurance on behalf of his Government that "we will wage that war side by side with you in accordance with

the best strategic employment of our forces, while there is breath in our bodies and while blood flows through our veins."

Mr. Churchill was here speaking of the future. At the time he was pledging the word of his nation to a war with Japan till victory was gained, the reports of the front where his forces were specially engaged in trying to break through the "Jungle war" & other difficulties Japanese defences in Burma were none too cheerful.

The five-months-old enterprise to retake the west coast of Burma was ending in failure. The main British objective had been to take Akyab, the small seaport in Burma nearest India. Its success depended on "speedy movement and sea landings"; and "neither was forthcoming." By land the almost impassable mountains and hills running north and south between India and Burma barred the way to "all but diversionary forces"; the major effort to re-conquer Burma must be made by sea, with landings in the western coast; between these stood "a Japanese fleet in being." All the reports, British or non-British, spoke of the difficulties of the terrain, of the new technique developed by the Japanese in this war of and through jungles. This plea ought by this time to have been discarded, as it is difficult to believe that the army that was sent from India did not contain a sufficient number of soldiers recruited from the hill tribes of the north-west, of the Himalayan ranges—Pathans, Gurkhas, Bhutiyas, Assamese, Garos, Kukis and others numerous to mention. If these hill tribes could not supply jungle fighters born to the game, there must be something wrong somewhere that has yet to be found by the organisers who aspire to beat the Japanese. They have to meet impatience and criticism from their own people. This is how the New York weekly—*Time*—frames these :

"The troops used had been trained for the desert, had only a few weeks jungle experience. They never solved Japanese tactics, never exploited the jungle. Casualties through disease and action approached 100 per cent in the original units; re-placements had even less training, hence the troops became rawer and rawer. Commanders were no more prepared for the jungle than the soldiers; they showed a singular lack of knowledge and imagination in their conduct of the campaign."

In Britain also this campaign was expected to be "a sizeable" undertaking that would help to retrieve the prestige of the British army and traditions built by it in the Middle and Far East. Supply difficulties & others The failure of the expedition created a feeling that it was not easy for the Churchill Ministry to easily mollify. By the third week of May, 1943, news of this discomfiture was at regular intervals being broken to the British public. Graham Stanford, London *Daily Mail* "special correspondent with the British forces in Burma", in summing up the situation made reference to "infiltration by small Japanese parties"; in the Arakan campaign this has become a "bogy since the beginning." Why, it has not been explained. The Wingate expedition had during this period scoured for about three months a part of North Burma between the Chindwin and the Irrawaddy. A map in a *Daily Mail* issue traced the progress of this expedition which took the raiders to Myitkyina and passed through the State of Manipur on its return journey. The story told showed that infiltration and jungle warfare—the difficulties made so

much of in despatches from Arakan in 1943, and during 1942 in Burma and Malaya—need not be trotted out on all occasions—as an excuse for failure of campaigns against Japan. These have lost novelty even to the man in the street. Incidentally the story told revealed that the organization for “jungle warfare” need not be a long or difficult task. The British contingent in the Wingate expedition were made up of “medium-sized, rather sallow operatives from Lanchashire mills and factories”; within six months Brigadier Wingate, leader of the expedition, had “turned these men into expert jungle fighters who could stalk either Jap or wild animals in the forests and mountains with Indian stealth”. The British organisers in India had at their command this “Indian stealth” for more years than one can remember; why they could not use this “Indian” skill in fighting the Japanese during these more than eighteen months in the wilds and jungles of Arakan and other areas further north, the world does not yet know. If Lancashire mill operatives and factory workers could be trained into expert jungle fighters in course of six months, the children of hills and jungles of India should not have taken this much time. The Delhi-Simla military bureaucracy have somehow failed to utilize their services. And it would be wise for their propagandists to refrain from mentioning these difficulties of jungle warfare in their propaganda sheets. Silence is golden here. The failure of supply also was mentioned—jungle warfare was handicapped by “a complicated supply system”. In the second week of May, a New Delhi message elaborately explained the various causes of this set-back. The event was thus described: “The difficulty is that the Japs as a people are accustomed to a strenuous life on the diet which is easily carried, while British troops depend still on tinned foods, tea and condensed milk to keep up strength. Even Indian troops require more food than the Japanese.” There also appears to have been faulty co-ordination of activities by the land, sea and air forces. The British came to within 25 miles of Akyab, main Japanese supply base in the area, the only port in north-west Burma, capture of which would have opened the way to Mandalay to them, as well as enabled them to dominate this part of the Bay of Bengal. Similar misfortune happened in another front to the Japanese. They failed to proceed nearer than 30 miles to Port Moresby in the New Guinea island the capture of which would have brought them to Australia. These are instances of the fickleness of war’s fortunes. The re-opening of the Arakan campaign six months later (November, 1943) has not improved matters for any of the combatant armies, as we write these lines (January, 1944). The day-light bombing of the Calcutta Port area in December (1943) was spectacular. That it could not be followed was a proof that air cover over eastern India had reached a pitch which Japanese tacticians had to take careful note of. It may, perhaps, also be that following German strategy Japan was organising her defensive arrangements and building some sort of a “Fortress” in south-east Asia.

At the end of the period we have been dealing with (January—June, 1943), the Japanese have not been dislodged from any of the far-flung strong-holds which they have captured from the Allies or established in the mainland of Asia and in the thousands of islands and atolls in the area stretching from Timor in the Dutch East Indies to

In the north &
south Pacific front

the Solomon Islands—forming an arc of about 2,000 miles. A U. S. A. estimate has it, published in the last week of June, 1943, that the Japanese air force “scattered along the South Pacific front probably totals 1,500 to 2,000—a good many more than the Allies have mastered in the same theatre”. The air bases built by the Japanese in this area had brought them within “bomber range” of the “northern territory” of Australia: Rabaul, the great Japanese base in New Britain, about 1,000 miles north-east from Townsville in Queensland; Koepang, 500 miles north-west from Darwin which is the only worth-while port and base on the northern coast of Australia, and Wewak in New Guinea is only 700 miles off. Their names recur ever again during this period as points of attack by U. S. and Australian air and naval forces, as places from which the Japanese sent their raiders on Allied concentrations. During the latter half of 1943 American and Australian bombers appeared to have rendered inoffensive certain of these bases, specially those in New Guinea, New Georgia, Rendova, Bougainville—Munda and Viru in the second and Kahili in the last. Bombing expeditions over the Gilbert and the Marshall Islands further north approaching the “Fortress” built by Japan in the mandated islands, have been reported. In the farthest north the island of Attu was cleared of Japanese forces. Chicagof Harbour was the last to surrender. The success of this side-show was not unimportant, as the following considerations will show.

The loss of the Aleutians has removed from under her feet the stepping-stone from which Japan could have tried to jump on Alaska and Canada's west coastal areas. She had built a
Possibilities and Canada's west coastal areas. She had built a
opened by Siberian “bomber runway” at Attu; its loss has rendered the
bases “fighter runway” built at Kiska inoffensive. It has
 also laid open to U. S. A. attack the Kurile Islands,
 600 miles off—not a great distance for modern bombers.
 And we have been told that though Tokyo is 2,000 miles
 from there by air, it “is not a large gap to cover.” This is propaganda
 we know; for during the present war half of that gap has not been easy to
 cover. Instances of such adventure have been rarest. Of course, air-craft
 carriers from which Tokyo was once in a while in April, 1942, bombed, was
 a different proposition. But there are even in their case difficulties
 in the way. Otherwise, bombers over Japan would have been more
 frequent. And the leaders of the Allied Powers know that the time
 for such improvisations is not yet. They have recognised the fact that
 for the success of any such venture, some attacks on the island home
 of the Japanese people, they would have to depend on Soviet Russia.
 Mr. Churchill thought loudly of such an eventuality when in the last
 week of May, 1943, he—“seated side by side with President Roosevelt
 in the President's study at White House”—to quote from the London
Daily Mail correspondent at Washington, bespoke such help:

“...it was no secret that the Allies would like to make use of Siberian bases
 at an appropriate time for bombing operations against Japan”.

This kite-flying coincided in time with the visit of Mr. Joseph Davis,
 some-time U. S. A. ambassador at Moscow, to Marshal Stalin with a
 “sealed” letter to him from his President. The world's Press was
 busy speculating on the contents of this letter. We have seen a

version to say that the letter contained among many other topics a request for permission to use by the Allied Powers of the Siberian bases to which Mr. Churchill had made such wistful reference. Marshal Stalin has not yet been able to accede to the request of his western allies. The "appropriate time" has not come, appropriate to Soviet interests and necessities, though there has been a meeting at the capital of Iran of the three leaders of the principal "United Nations". Japan was having a needed respite.

Allied military commentators have begun to say that Japan was being forced, as Germany has been, on the defensive; that her strategy was "to hold every inch of this outer rim (in the Pacific) as long as possible, to make every Allied move as expensive as possible". It is being contended that the Allies could well afford to stand this expense which Japan could not. They were better able to stand a long war. Up to the end of 1942 the Allied Powers built their hopes of ultimate victory on a long-drawn war; their industrial potentiality, specially of the United States, would, it was claimed, enable them to outstay the power of endurance of the Axis Powers; they hoped by prolonging the war to create war weariness amongst the peoples of the Axis countries and break their morale. But such a strategy cut both ways. The leaders of the Allied Powers were conscious of this development. Mr. Churchill gave expression to fears and hopes bearing on this subject, sometime in May, 1943.

"There is one grave danger which will go along with us until the end. That danger is the undue prolongation of the war. It is in the dragging out of war at enormous expense till the democracies are tired or bored or split that the main hopes of Germany and Japan must now reside. We must destroy this hope as we have destroyed so many others".

But this was speaking of the future. In the immediate present, the present that we have been speaking of—the first six months of 1943—Japan was on the top grade. Her Premier, General Hideki Tojo, speaking at the 82nd Extraordinary Session of the Imperial Diet, held in the second week of June, reiterated the permanent element of his country's foreign policy—"It is Japan's immutable policy to free Greater Asia from age-long Anglo-Saxon domination". Returning from a tour in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity region a few weeks later, he could report that the peoples of these areas understood "Nippon's true intentions" and were "concentrating full efforts to destroy the Anglo-American Powers." As preliminary steps towards securing this "collaboration" Japan had taken certain steps that would appeal to the interests and sentiments of the peoples concerned. First came the Nanking administration. It has been given a certain amount of more power in the administrative field; its fighting forces under Japanese officers were being given a little more military training with modern arms and ammunitions; these were being used for garrison duty thus relieving regular Japanese units. In the session of the Imperial Diet referred to above the Japanese Premier promised "to accord the honour of independence to the Philippines in the course of the current year"; he intended "to realise this state of affairs as early as possible in Java...and Burma." India also was not forgotten by him. "Japan

Japan's appeal to
Pan-Asiatic senti-
ment and interests

is resolved.....to enable India to obtain full independence in the true sense of the term", declared he; and Subhas Chandra Basu's "army of liberation" was being nursed and licked into shape by the Japanese war lords, if we understand aright the words of Lord Linlithgow's Home Secretary uttered in reply to a question in the Council of State. Thailand received slices of territory—about 38,770 square miles—transferred to her from the Malaya States "as an earnest of better things to come." These items of news pointed out to the process by which Japan was trying to lay the foundation stones of her "Greater Asia Co-prosperity Sphere", and strengthening their setting.

As against this political strategy, Britain and the United States have not been able so far to put a better show, to erect a better sounding-board. In the "protectorate" of Burma, Japan has been able to place at the head of the administration, Dr. Ba Maw, a former Premier of Burma whom the British had to imprison for a little while during the last days of their regime in the country. In the Philippines, men like Mayor Jorge Vargas of Manila, once a close friend of President Quezon and General MacArthur, have been "collaborating" with the new ruling authorities. A U. S. A. publicist, Clark Lee, Associated Press Pacific correspondent, has said that "it would not be realistic to write off" such men as "Quislings".

This writer has also described how Japan has been organising the natural and human resources of these territories for fighting her wars with Britain and the United States. 25 per cent of the staffs of the Tokyo Ministries of Commerce and Industry, of Railways, of Welfare, of Agriculture and Education, together with other "specialists", are being sent there. The Japanese language is being taught, as well as customs and beliefs. Thousands of Japanese families are going there as pioneers of "better life" represented by Japan; they will make their homes in these territories. Young men and women from China, Java, the Philippines, Indo-China, Thailand, Burma are being brought to Japan to be trained to appreciate the virtues of the "Co-prosperity Sphere", and work and labour for its firmer foundation, for beating back the assaults of Anglo-American capitalist-imperialism. Mr. Lee appears to think that the Japanese have been making a success of this job, being allowed the time to do so. Already they have had two years to achieve the "military, economic and political consolidation" of East Asia. From the Philippines they have been getting chrome and copper; from Malaya tin and rubber; coal has been coming from the Selangor mines; petroleum suitable for aviation gasoline comes from the Sumatra oil fields, from Borneo come coal, high-grade petroleum, gold, copper, mercury and cinnabar; Indo-China supplies rice and coal; Java rubber, quinine and petroleum; and in North China "there is all the iron and coal that Japan can use". These resources have been enabling her to strengthen and extend her heavy industries. And for their protection from Allied bombers she has been dispersing these to different points in her far-flung empire. Certain elements of these have already been set up in North China, Korea, Shanghai, Manila, Singapore, and Manchuria, relieving pressure from the cities of Tokyo, Yokahama, Nagoya, Kobe,

The case of
Philippines &
Burma

Japan is having
time to organize
her conquests

Osaka, Shimoneseki, and Moji—all concentrated in four areas along a 440 mile strip of coast south and west of Tokyo. Japan has also began trying to connect Shanghai with Singapore by railway. This would give her a net-work of interior communications—securing to her a position almost as strong as Germany's in Europe. These defensive arrangements follow the pattern set up in every country that has been caught up by "total war".

We have brought out the story of Japan's fight with the Anglo-American Powers. But the key-stone of the offensive operations directed against her lies in China—she who has borne the heat and burden, the sorrows and sufferings, the insults and indignities at the hands of her rapacious neighbour for six long years—for four years unaided by anybody, and for the last two years with inadequate help from these two leaders of the "United Nations". The New York weekly—*Time*—in its issue of July 12, 1943, gives a "balance sheet" of the sixth year of her war with Japan: "two terrible famines that swept Honan and Kwantung; a price level now 87 times the pre-war level; the throttling grip of blockade; the hunger of vast armies for medicines and munitions; the creeping paralysis of transport." As against this is to be put the "only major Japanese military drive—the campaign in western Hupeh—(that) has been smashed"; the Chinese air force has "taken the air for the first time in several years, shot down enemy planes, and co-operated with the U. S. 14th Air Force". This report does but give a very inadequate picture of the China front as it was being sought to be battered down by Japan. During the whole of March, 1943, the Japanese threw "an eight-pronged drive southward toward huge dyke-bound Tungting Lake". The campaign had an economic objective—it "seriously interfered with the spring plantings of rice and cotton in one of China's too few fertile basins." The blasting of the dykes of the Lake flooded a huge area west of it which not only fed lakhs of soldiers but people in far distant provinces." Eight weeks later the Japanese tried to exploit this position by driving toward the key mountain passes—Yuyankwan and Changyang. But they met with stiff resistance here. The Chinese threw "crack" units into the fight and broke the Japanese formations stationed at the Yuyankwan Pass, and pursued them east. By the first week of June reports of "the victory on the Yangtze" could be given to the world. Elements of five Japanese divisions" followed by soldiers of the "puppet" regime at Nanking, were hurrying back to the north of the river. Ten miles up the river from Ichang stands a mammoth slab of rock called Shihpai. Here was "one key to the fortifications of Central China"; against it the Japanese threw full three divisions. But the defence held. And the attackers had to beat a quick retreat. "The Chinese had defeated the largest single striking force the Japanese had put together since Burma in 1942" in the China front. This gave a new confidence to the Chinese themselves, put heart into their carefully-nursed air force, and demonstrated the value of the help that the 14th U. S. Air Force could render to China. This force was stationed in bases in South China, it hurried to Central China in time to strengthen the small Air Force of China when news of this Japanese offensive reached it.

Japan's attempt
to break China's
"rice bowl"

But this victory did not assure the Chinese people that deliverance was near. She could not forget that Japan had caught her unprepared to wage a modern war; that victory in this war could come out of effective help from the Western world that had not felt able till the sixth year of the war to accept her as an equal in the comity of modern nations. Bitter experience has been teaching her how dependent she was for survival as an independent nation on this world lying across ten thousand miles of ocean waters, the waters of three of the greatest oceans. This dependence was brought home to her by three facts even during 1943. Madame Chiang Kai-shek had to undertake a journey to the United States to plead with the leaders of the "United Nations" for greater help to her war-scarred people. Lieutenant-General Arnold, chief of U. S. Air Force, was sent to Chungking by President Roosevelt, with instructions to "find out how best to build up an air strength in China". The gist of his report is not of a hopeful nature; a sizeable air force could not be maintained in China "if it must be supplied by air alone"; real and effective help to China could only come when "a land supply route" has been cleared. The easiest was "probably through Burma", as a commentator has surmised. That has yet to come. The other fact that has been disturbing the mind of China is the political strategy that Japan has been directing to secure the help of Asiatic peoples to uphold her "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere". We have tried to indicate above certain of the lines followed by her. Mayor Vargas' speech on the anniversary of the first Pearl Harbour day linking the fortunes of the Philippines with those of Japan, Dr. Ba Maw's declaration that the blood of Burmese would flow for making the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" dream into a reality—these may have no intrinsic value of their own. But public men and publicists in China who have felt in their bones the cruel effectiveness of Japanese methods of war and who know their Japan if anybody in this world can be said to know her as well—they have never been able to reconcile themselves to the Churchill strategy that ruled the "United Nations"—Germany comes first, then Japan. Their impatience with this policy has been well-known. It found a new expression in the March of 1943 when Japanese hordes were driving to the "rice bowl" of China lying north-west of Tungting Lake. The Communist newspaper of Chungking—*Ta Kung Pao*—asked:

"How strong will Japan become in nine months, in one and half years, or in two and half years during which the United Nations are concentrating against Hitler?"

The months that have followed since then have not shown the "United Nations" to military advantage in the front that Japan has created in east Asia for liquidating Anglo-American domination from the life of half the world's population huddled in this region. The world has come to know since December 7, 1941, how strong Japan is. It has often wondered at the way that China has been able to fight back the successive waves of Japanese armies as these have sought to engulf her. We have often called it a "miracle", and have

China's fear of
Japan's political
strategy

"Miracle" in
China—an
explanation

tried to understand and explain it. In Vol. I of 1942 of the *Indian Annual Register* we made a special attempt to do so. As months have been added to months and lengthened into years our wonder and admiration have grown at this spectacle. The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek have represented to us the heroic spirit of this ancient people—a co-equal with ours in time and in the ageless philosophy of decent human conduct. Their deeds have written their names in imperishable letters in the world's history. Their speeches and messages have carried to the world's farthest corners the call to heroic endurance in the cause of national self-respect. The majority of these, addressed as these were to the Chinese people, could not be understood by non-Chinese-speaking peoples. It was only recently, on the sixth anniversary of Japan's unprovoked and undeclared war on China, that 60 of the Generalissimo's speeches and messages have been compiled and made available to English-speaking peoples, in a volume entitled—*Resistance and Reconstruction*. Extracts from these have brought us near to an explanation of the "miracle" in China. These give us an idea of the "strategy of vast space" by the adoption of which China's military leadership has been able to hold back Japan for six long years. On October 25, 1938, the Generalissimo indicated it thus :

"Our plan has been to establish the bases of our resistance, not along the coast or rivers or at centres of communication but in the vast interior.....(The) war.....is beyond considerations of time and space."

But it is not military acumen only that has enabled the Chinese people to withstand Japanese attacks. The "will" of the people has been transformed into a "powerful weapon", into a "dynamic force". When Japan launched on her "China Incident", her militarists failed to take into account this impalpable force. The Generalissimo who had his military training in Japan and came to know of the limitations of this group, put his fingers on these on April 10, 1940 :

"Nothing will ever make (the Japanese) understand the measure of the spiritual strength of our people; their ignorance of the age is incurable, and of China still deeper."

These quotations prepare our minds for the future of China in the comity of modern nations. It was sketched out in words that are true to the traditions of a country that had put the soldier at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy. On November 17, 1942, the Generalissimo said :

"We repudiate the leadership of Asia idea because the Fuehrer principle has been synonymous with domination and exploitation precisely as the [Japanese] East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere has stood for a race of mythical supermen lording over grovelling subject races. China has no desire to replace Western imperialism in Asia with an Oriental imperialism or isolationism".

This repudiation by China's supreme leader of "Chinese imperialism" of which certain Euro-American publicists have already begun to talk is a sign-post that should be taken note of. It gives expression to a hope that perhaps may not be fulfilled if human nature,—Euro-American human nature rather than Asiatic—does not undergo more radical change in its mental make-up. But in the living present

**Allied strategy
in Pacific area**

the men and women of China have been writing in blood and tears their repudiation of the cannibal principle in State-craft. Their Western allies can but send them trickles of help on which to sustain their offensive and defensive arrangements. The situation, as it is, is not satisfactory if we are to judge by the articles that have been appearing in the Press of the United States. We have already referred to one such article which had a sensational heading—*Japan has already won her war*. We have culled from it the items that indicated how Japan has been stabilizing her position owing to the failure of the two leaders of the "United Nations"—Britain and the United States—to disturb her from the juicy portions of the newly-got possessions. Another article, written after an actual tour of the fighting fronts in the Pacific area, by Hans Baldwin, military editor of the *New York Times*, is more disturbing. It tries to throw the spot-light on the Pacific strategy of the Allied Powers, on the deficiencies that mark the China front. He discussed the possibilities of the various routes from which the heart of the Nipponese empire could be attacked. Mr. Baldwin thinks that as "the real, almost insuperable problem is supply", that as China is virtually cut off from the world, the strategists of the Allied command have to find a route of supply. The British thesis appears to be that the winning of the "Burma Road" would open out such a route; the U. S. thesis appears to be that on the Indo-Burma frontier the Allies should keep the Japanese engaged and try to send supplies to China through India, while the main attack on Japan should come from the sea and air, starting from Hawaii. Mr. Baldwin subjects by implication the British thesis to criticism by making light of the possibilities of the "Burma Road". As one ground division in active combat consumes about 18,900 maunds of ammunition per day,—the "Burma Road" which used to bring about one third of this weight every day, cannot be much of a help by itself alone in modern warfare. The east coast ports of China are all in Japanese possession. Canton, for instance, used to admit about eight times the supplies that could be carried on the "Burma Road". The capture of these ports from the land side would require the conquest of Burma, Malaya, Thailand, and French Indo-China. And "in those jungles and steamy vastnesses the enemy might be able to hold out for years". Without Russia's help or connivance war cannot be brought to bear against "Japan's continental power". She is a great sea power also, and it has become the special United States job to tighten the ring that encircles Japanese strongholds—from Australia and the Solomons, from the Aleutians, from India and China. But

"The main effort may well be westward from Hawaii and Midway—a direct thrust against the heart of Japan."

The division of work sketched by Mr. Baldwin appears to relegate the Burma front, and the base in India, to a subordinate position.

Sir Archibald
Wavell
as war chief

The announcement in the last week of June, 1943, that Sir Archibald Wavell, commander-in-chief of India, would succeed Lord Linlithgow as its Governor-General, suggested other changes in keeping

with this speculation. Sir Archibald had been supreme commander of the A. B. C. D. forces in their fight against Japan during the disastrous months of 1942. Did his record in this campaign count in this change-over as Sir Claude Auchinleck's Lybia record had sent him into temporary eclipse? It is useless for us to speculate on the various considerations that must have influenced the British War Cabinet to relieve Sir Archibald of his life's vocation and to send him to the gilded chambers of Delhi-Simla. British military policy has seen to it that the people of India do not develop their military instincts and judgment. We, therefore, cannot judge Sir Archibald as a leader of men in modern warfare. We can only share with our readers what a U. S. commentator said of him during the Lybian campaign:

"Up to the early summer of 1941 he had not learned to handle a large force as ably as he has repeatedly shown that he can handle a small force. When the Italians entered the war in June, 1940, General Wavell had a compact little army in the Western Desert. He moved it easily and beautifully, holding off the Italian force ten times the size of his own. Gradually, as the Middle Eastern forces expanded under his feet, he floated out of depth. The bigger the forces, equipment and units he had to handle became, the harder General Wavell found it to keep control."

To a layman this criticism pointed out to a lack of the power of co-ordination from which Lord Linlithgow's administration of India has suffered the most during the war years (1939—'43). The Governor-General-to-be when he was called upon in the opening months of 1942 to guide the Allied forces in east Asia had an almost impossible situation to handle owing to the supineness of London and the crass incompetence of the local administrations. The conceit of an imperial race had twisted all natural human relation in the "dependent" part of the empire, and the sullen but silent discontent of the subject population found expression in non-co-operation with war activities, and when the Japanese actually attacked, in armed revolt against the ruling authorities. The self-complacence of the Imperial General Staff had neglected to organise the forces and resources of the "dependent" empire with a view to fight a modern war which we have been told is "total war" requiring the co-operation of the heart, mind and body of the people concerned. The empire statesmen of Britain had under-estimated all the material and non-material dissatisfactions that Japan would exploit and inflame against the racial arrogance of the Euro-American peoples. It is these inadequacies of Britain's imperial policy that Sir Archibald Wavell had at short notice been required to patch up in 1942. And if he failed to meet the demand, the fault was not his alone, but of the system. He was part of a machine, and that machine went wrong. His individual responsibility for the breakdown in the military campaign will be assessed by the future historian.

Now that he has been called upon to play a new role the publicist in India will naturally hunt out his political ideas and affiliations. He is said to have helped to ease the situation in Egypt when Sa'ad Zaglul Pasha was leading that people. We have not heard that when Sir Stafford Cripps came out on his mission to India,

His "Far East
Asia" record

Sir Archibald as
a politician

and Sir Archibald was commander-in-chief of India, the latter was any way helpful in trying to enlist nationalist Indian feeling on the side of the Allied cause. We know that he had interviews with the Congress President, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, and Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, for the purpose of evolving a self-respecting formula for the defence arrangements of the country the failure to find which was one of the causes of the rejection of the Cripps proposals. It may be that the individual in Sir Archibald could not rise above the British class interests and conceits that really guided and ruled the Delhi-Simla bureaucracy. That was in 1942. Fifteen months later the soldier has been made into a politician. His supreme duty now was to bridge the "spiritual alienation" that separated India and Britain. The months ahead will show how he rises to the call of the situation.

It is natural, however, on such occasions to speculate on the course of activities as it is hoped or apprehended to be pursued by the new ruler or rulers. In the present instance, **The British Press on Sir Archibald** - since the announcement of Sir Archibald Wavells' appointment, the speculation has been mostly done by the British publicists, their opposite numbers of India having found the thing useless. The soldier has been made into a politician not because unsuspected qualities of statesmanship have been discovered in him, but because he will be best able "to steer India's course through the storms of war and the upheaval of an industrial and social re-making", to quote from the editorial in the *London Observer* (weekly). The more clever among the interpreters of British opinion have sought to build up a thesis on the material improvement in the life of our people to be worked under the new Governor-General by fixing on an item out of his "mental bag." The ruling classes in modern nations were found prepared to spend thousands of crores of rupees in carrying on the destructive activities of war; these same classes were found to be violently opposed to the spending of a few crores of rupees for the arts of peace that would enrich the life of the commonalty of their lands. Sir Archibald had commented on this contrast, and British commentators hastened to drive its lessons home into us that under the Wavell regime we would have our *dal* and *bhat*, and plenty of them. These mentors took pains to educate us anew into the belief that the problem in India was not political alone, concerned with her inferior status in the comity of nations; it was more economic concerned with the poverty in the material life of India. They played round this topic, forgetful that British policy during the centuries has made matters worse, the latest manifestation of which was the famine in Bengal that killed off more than twenty lakhs of people. They talked, as the *London Times* did, of pressing on with "social and economic programmes, too long subordinated to politics and neglected in India"; they hoped at the end of this process—"at one later stage to seek in practical objectives and measures the release of the will and power to co-operate, without which the constitutional outlook is dark indeed."

There is nothing new in this line of argument. When alien rulers are confronted by a political blind alley, they and their apologists

begin to talk of the object of all government being "roast mutton, potatoes"—the equivalent of the Indian *dal bhat* or *roti*. The London *Times* was not the only organ of British opinion that harped on this theme. The *Observer* talked of the "Industrial Revolution" that has been remaking our life—"a period comparable in some respects with the first decade of Soviet Russia." One can only smile at this allusion when he remembered that in the land of the Soviets there were no alien rulers to dictate the thoughts and activities of the people, no foreign finance-capital that preferred its own interests to those of the natives of the soil. The *Economist* chimed in with this thesis when it wrote: "There can be no better foundation for the common cause between Britain and India than the formulation of steps towards social and economic rehabilitation that are needed"; it talked of the "bread and butter requirements" of India that alone can be "sure foundation for the bid of this soldier turned statesman to be the last British-chosen Viceroy of India."

The similarity of the language used by these three papers cannot be accidental. We have yet to find out why they were led to build up a new character for Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell as a miracle-man in financial and economic affairs. We propose to wait and see. During the interval we are prepared to leave the subject where it was left by Sydney Smith speaking of another victim of imperialism. That was about a hundred years back when Daniel O'Connell was making a new history for Ireland, and a potato famine was on the way to halve the population of that island. Those who profitted from British exploitation of Ireland had cogent reasons to feel disgusted with things as men and nature were making these for the discomfiture of the ruling classes. And Sydney Smith prescribed for the ease of their souls a nostrum as ineffective in the 19th century as it will prove in the 20th.

"The object of all government is roast mutton, potatoes, claret, a stout constable and honest justice, a clear high way and a free chapel. What trash to be bawling in the streets about the Green Island, the Isle of the Ocean; the bold anthem go brag. A far better anthem would be Erin go bread and cheese, Erin go cabins that will keep out the rains, Erin go pantaloons without holes in them."

—(Specially contributed by Sri Suresh Chandra Deb.)

Proceedings of

The Council of State

AND

The Central Legislative Assembly

AND

Provincial Councils & Assemblies

JANUARY—JUNE 1943

The Council of State

LIST OF MEMBERS

NOMINATED—(a) Officials—(18)

1. HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL SIR
CLAUDE JOHN EYRE AUCHINLECK,
G.C.I.E., C.B. C.S.I., D.S.O., C.B.E., A.D.C.
2. THE HONOURABLE SIR MAHOMED
USMAN, K.C.I.E.
3. THE HONOURABLE MALIK SIR FIROZ
KHAN NOON, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.
4. THE HONOURABLE SIR JOGENDRA
SINGH.
5. THE HONOURABLE SIR SATYENDRA
NATH ROY, C.S.I., C.I.E.
6. THE HONOURABLE MR. C. E. JONES,
C.S.I., C.I.E.
7. THE HONOURABLE MR. E. CONRAN-
SMITH, C.S.I. C.I.E.
8. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S.
BOZMAN, C.I.E.
9. THE HONOURABLE MR. N. R. PILLAI,
C.I.E., C.B.E.
10. THE HONOURABLE MR. H. C. PRIOR,
C.S.I., C.I.E.
11. THE HONOURABLE MR. M. S. A.
HYDARI, C.S.I., C.I.E.
12. THE HONOURABLE MR. SHAVAK
A. LAL, C.I.E.
13. THE HONOURABLE MR. B. R. SEN.
2. THE HONOURABLE MR. M. Ct. M.
CHIDAMBARAM OHETTYAR.
3. THE HONOURABLE MR. NARAYANDAS
GIRDHARDAS.
4. THE HONOURABLE MR. V. RAMADAS
PANTULU.
5. THE HONOURABLE SAIYAD MOHAMED
PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR.
6. THE HONOURABLE MR. GOVINDLAL
SHIVLAL MOTILAL.
7. THE HONOURABLE SIR SHANTIDAS
ASKURAN.
8. THE HONOURABLE MR. MANOCKJI
NADIRSHAW DALAL.
9. THE HONOURABLE SIR SULEMAN
CASSUM HAJI MITHA, C.I.E., J.P.
10. THE HONOURABLE KHAN BAHADUR
ALI BUKSH MOHAMED HUSSAIN, C.B.E.
11. THE HONOURABLE MR. R. H.
PARKAR.
12. THE HONOURABLE MR. KUMAR-
SANKAR RAY CHAUDHURY.
13. THE HONOURABLE KUMAR
NRIPENDRA NARAYAN SINHA.
14. THE HONOURABLE MR. SUSIL
KUMAR ROY CHOWDHURY.
15. THE HONOURABLE K. B. SYED
JITHISHAM HYDER CHAUDHURY

(b) Non-officials—(13).

1. THE HONOURABLE SIR DAVID
DEVADOSS.
2. THE HONOURABLE DIWAN BAHADUR
SIR K. RAMUNNI MENON.
3. THE HONOURABLE SIR A.
PARASURAM PATRO, K.C.I.E.
4. THE HONOURABLE SIR RAHIMTOOLA
CHINROY.
5. THE HONOURABLE SIR JOSNA
GHOSAL, C.S.I., C.I.E.
6. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR
SATYENDRA KUMAR DAS.
7. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR SIR
SATYA CHARAN MUKHERJEE, C.B.E.
8. THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHENDRA
LAL DAS.
9. THE HONOURABLE RAJA CHARANJIT
SINGH.
10. THE HONOURABLE MR. KHURSHID
ALI KHAN, M.B.E.
11. THE HONOURABLE SIR MANECKJI
BYRAMJI DADABHOY, K.C.S.I.,
K.C.I.E., L.L.D., BAR-AT-LAW
(President).
12. THE HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-
COLONEL
SIR S. HISSAM-UD-DIN BAHADUR. C.I.E.
13. THE HONOURABLE SARDAR BAHADUR
SOBHA SINGH, O.B.E.
16. THE HONOURABLE MR. ABDUL
RAZAK HAJEE ABDUL SUTTAR.
17. THE HONOURABLE MR. J. H. BURDER.
18. THE HONOURABLE RAJA YUVERAJ
DUTTA SINGH.
19. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT HIRDAY
NATH KUNZRU.
20. THE HONOURABLE PANDIT PRAKASH
NARAIN SAPRU.
21. THE HONOURABLE HAJI SYED
MOHAMED HUSAIN.
22. THE HONOURABLE CHAUDHURI
NIAMATULLAH.
23. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR
LALA RAMSARAN DAS. C.I.E.
24. THE HONOURABLE SARDAR SIR
BUTA SINGH. C.B.E.
25. THE HONOURABLE CHOUDHURY
ATAULLAH KHAN TARAR
26. THE HONOURABLE MAHARAJADHI-
RAJA SIR KAMESHWAR SINGH
K.C.I.E., of DARBHANGA.
27. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR
SRI NARAIN MAHTHA.
28. THE HONOURABLE MR. NIKUNJA
KISHORE DAS.
29. THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN
IMAM.
30. THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V.
KALIKAR.
31. THE HONOURABLE MR. BRIJLAL
NANDLAL BIYANI.
32. THE HONOURABLE MAULVI ALI
ASGAR KHAN.

ELECTED—Non-officials—(32).

1. THE HONOURABLE SIR N.
GOPALASWAMI AYYANGAR,
C.S.I., C.I.E.

Proceedings of the Council

Budget Session—New Delhi—15th. February to 3rd. April 1943

RAILWAY BUDGET FOR 1943—44

The Council of State began its Budget session at New Delhi on the 15th. February 1943, Sir *Maneckji Dadabhoy* presiding. Sir *Leonard Wilson*, Chief Commissioner of Railways in presenting the Railway Budget for 1943-44 said :

"During this year, the railways over the main traffic routes have been working available engines and wagons to full capacity when these were not interrupted by floods and cyclones and by sabotage, yet the number of wagons loaded up to date this year is less by about 15 per cent on the gauge and about 17 per cent on the metre gauge than in last year. This is due to the hold up of wagons in ports and military depots and to dislocation of goods traffic by the movement of a larger number of military special trains."

Sir *Leonard* paid a tribute to the Central and Regional Priority Authorities which have so ably helped transportation and consequently the war effort, by the prevention of unnecessary movements of traffic, by distributing traffic between available means of transport and by giving priority to the movement of commodities most necessary for the life of the country and for war purposes.

He added, "The shortage of visible supplies of food is one of the major difficulties with which the country is faced today. Up to date it can be said that an adequate supply of wagons has been made available for this purpose but food grains have not been offered for transport to the extent required to meet the demands in the deficient areas. The importation from overseas of large quantities of wheat, which has been arranged, will help to solve the food problem and railways will assist in the distribution of this vital commodity though this will further tax the already heavily loaded system.

"The disturbances to railway working due to unforeseen occurrences have been more than usual this year. Hurs caused some dislocation to the traffic in Sind in the early part of the year, there were serious breaches of the lines in Sind, Bihar and Assam due to floods during the monsoon and in November a cyclone was the cause of a breach of the line in Orissa. In August a campaign of destruction of the railways was started by misguided people and their attempts to interrupt communications adversely affected traffic especially in August and September. The list of disturbances would be incomplete without reference to enemy bombing though this has not been severe. Our expenditure has been increased by the employment of many additional men for the prevention of accidents due to sabotage and whilst in most cases their efforts have proved successful there have been regrettable accidents to running trains some with loss of life.

In view of the ever-increasing demand for rail transport we may assume that during 1943-44 the railways will as in this year be worked to full capacity. The dislocation to traffic caused by sabotage and by floods and cyclones has to some extent adversely affected this year's earnings and though it would be unwise to assume that there will be no dislocation next year, we do assume that any which may result from unforeseen occurrences will have less effect than those of this year. We, therefore, expect that the gross traffic receipts in 1943-44 will exceed the estimate for the current year by $\frac{1}{2}$ of a crore and will reach the record figure of 150 crores. In addition we expect a net revenue of 2.17 crores from miscellaneous transactions."

In conclusion he said : "I would commend to the House the railwaymen who have done so well during a year in which the pressure on them has been greater than ever before. The greatest trial with which they have had to contend was that imposed by those who set out to destroy the track and other railway property, and in this trial they displayed the courage necessary to restore the damage and to keep the traffic moving. On each of the many occasions of sabotage to the track, a derailment with loss of life might have occurred, had it not been for the vigilance of the staff. Despite the vigilance there have been derailments and loss of life. Yet the train staff continued to work their trains in the face of this danger. There have been several panic evacuations due to bombing or the fear of it, yet those who left the danger area expected railwaymen to continue at work and this they did with few exceptions, though there is nothing more infectious than panic. I said in this House last year that the

country expects railwaymen to carry on despite the fear or consequences of enemy attack. I said then that I believed they would do so and I still hold that belief."

CHANGES IN E. P. T. ACT URGED

16th. FEBRUARY :—The Council today rejected by 31 votes to 2, Mr *Hossain Imam's* resolution recommending changes in the Excess Profits Tax Act, 1940 increasing the percentage to 80%, lowering the taxable limit from Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 10,000 and requiring that no standard profit should be less than 4% on the invested capital, and that standard profit should not be higher than that shown in the return submitted by the assessee. Mr. *Imam* said that he believed in the theory that the war should not be made an occasion for profiteering, and his resolution would not only be helpful to the Government but a large number of people. He wanted a large number of those persons who were making huge profits from war supplies to come under the purview of the Act. Opposing the resolution, Mr. *P. N. Saprú* said that to work a capitalist system of economy the incentive effort should be kept alive. He wondered why the so-called capitalists had been marked out for a special attack. Mr. *V. V. Kalikar* was of the opinion that if the mover's new point was accepted, it would help to kill Indian industry. Speaking on behalf of the Government, Mr. *C. F. Jones*, Finance Secretary, said it was impossible to discuss the present resolution at a time when the whole budgetary position was not before the House. An isolated aspect of the budget could not be discussed in advance. The resolution affected the incidence as well as the working of the EPT Act, and it was regarded by the Government as entirely unnecessary. As there was considerable opposition to his resolution, Mr. *Imam* wanted to withdraw it but the House insisted that it should be put to the vote.

DECONTROLLING OF PRICES

Pt. *H. N. Kunru* moved a resolution urging a co-ordinated policy throughout the country in respect of wheat and other foodstuffs, following the recent decontrolling of prices. He criticized the Government of first adhering to price-control and trying to make it effective by exports and also by the increased requirements of the country resulting from the greater purchasing power of the people. A situation like the present, Pt. *Kunru* said, called for effective remedy, and the whole country should be treated as one economic unit. He also urged for substantial shipments from abroad to relieve the food situation. Sir *Jogendra Singh* said that one striking result of the removal of control was that there was no black market now in the Punjab and that prices were now steadily going down. He said that an incentive had also to be provided to the producer so that more food could come into the market, which would result in an automatic fall in prices. Mr. *B. C. Holdsworth*, explaining the Government's attitude, said that he was prepared to accept the resolution. He said the Government did not remove the maximum price of wheat to please the Punjab Government as was suggested in some quarters, but in order to try to restore normal conditions of trade with a view to restoring confidence in the country, for want of which, and consequent hoarding, the country had to face the present condition. He thought that a return of confidence would bring out supplies and ease prices. Mr. *Holdsworth* added that the Government of India were getting a good deal of co-operation from the Provincial Governments who were putting their surpluses at the disposal of other deficit provinces. Discussion had not concluded when the House adjourned till the 22nd.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF RAILWAY BUDGET

22nd. FEBRUARY :—The Council held a general discussion on the Railway Budget today. The War Transport Member, Sir *Edward Benthall* referred to the manufacture of locomotives in India, and said that the Government had already decided to manufacture them in this country. The question was how soon construction could be taken in hand. He referred to the recommendations of the Humphrey-Srinivasan Committee, which were about to be implemented, when the war broke out. The scheme had to be held in abeyance in order to take up munitions production, more vitally important at that time. He claimed that the Government were perfectly justified in converting railway work-shops in India into munition-production factories. Consequent on Japan's entry into the war pressure on India's transport considerably increased, and in order to cope with the situation, there were heavier demands on locomotives and rolling stock available in the country. Sir *Edward* stated that all wagons ordered by the

Railway Board were being constructed in this country, very largely from Indian material but orders had to be placed abroad for locomotives. After explaining that a sudden turn-over to locomotive production in India was not possible as it involved the setting up of large new munitions factories in place of the railway workshops and also raised the question of availability of locomotive construction, the War Transport Member declared that the Government were discussing for the past several months, with experts the question of the best design for India. After it was decided upon, he said, they would consider whether at the juncture it would be profitable to have their own locomotive factories or to continue for the war period to obtain them from America. Referring to dismantlement of certain branch lines, the War Transport Member stated there was no likelihood of any further dismantlement, judging from present conditions. The post-war rail-road problem would be given serious attention at the proper time, but at the moment, there were other more serious problems facing us. and it was not possible to study a problem of such vast dimensions now. It had pleased him, he said, to find that the House had liked the Government's endeavours to systematize railway finances with regard to the Reserve Fund Depreciation Fund and transfer to General Revenue of portions of the surplus.

Sir A. P. Patro urging a revision of the allocation policy, said there should be a steady development of the Reserve Fund to enable the railways to stand on their own resources during the coming years. He further regretted that nothing had been done to provide facilities to passengers in spite of huge profits. He urged the speedy restoration of dismantled lines, as their removal had caused distress to the people.

Mr. Hossain Imam, referring to the walk-out by the Progressive Party earlier in the day, said: "We are in sympathy with our fellow countrymen, but we have a duty to those who have sent us here and therefore we are taking part in the discussion. Stating that the operating expenditure of the railways had increased enormously, he said a watch should be kept that increased income was not being squandered away in increased expenditure. He urged that more attention should be paid to the transport of people's food and asked the Defence Department to limit themselves to the bare necessity in the matter of wagons, etc.

Mr. M. N. Dalal referring to locomotive construction in India, said that if 200 locomotives had to be ordered from abroad, alternative arrangements should be made to replenish our stocks by starting locomotive factories in this country. He said that even experts had recommended that the use of railway workshops for other purposes was not proper.

Sir Shantidas Askaran also stressed the need for manufacturing locomotives in this country, apart from other reasons, in the interests of India's future industrial development. He said: "We have large sterling assets accumulating to our credit. There is the danger of utilizing these assets merely to patronize British industry even after the war. I want to guard against all such dangers".

Mr. R. H. Parker asked the Government to give proper consideration now to the difficult rail-road problem that would face them soon after the war, and give the matter proper weight while considering different aspects of the problems of railways.

ORDINANCES DURING WAR

24th. FEBRUARY :—The necessity for giving the executive authority a free hand in all matters concerning the prosecution of the war was stressed by Sir Sultan Ahmed, Law Member, in the Council today. He emphasized this point during a debate on Mr. P. N. Saprú's resolution urging the appointment of a committee to review the scope of ordinances promulgated by the Governor-General since the commencement of the war and their effect on the powers of the High Courts as criminal courts of appeal.

Sir Sultan said: "The power to issue ordinances is vested in the Governor-General under Section 72, Schedule 9 of the Government of India Act, 1925. He is the sole authority in cases of emergency to make and promulgate such ordinances and no authority can question his power to do so and ordinances so made have the like force of law as an Act passed by the Indian Legislature. That being the position if the Governor-General has promulgated an ordinance, the scope or any provision of which does not appeal to anyone else, neither the Governor-General-in-Council nor the Legislature have any jurisdiction to question his authority."

The Law Member, therefore, considered the resolution futile. He said it had, however, given him an opportunity to deal with the question of ordinances

generally about which misconception seemed to exist in the country. He said that when a country was at war the safety of the people depended on the efficient conduct of the war, for which the executive authority, as opposed to the Legislature, was primarily responsible. In conducting the war, the executive authority must not be hampered by the law but must be allowed to invoke it to its aid quickly. One way of enabling it to do so was to have an Act empowering it to make the rules. The other way was to use the ordinance making power. Analyzing the directions in which these powers had been used he said that at the time when India was not involved closely in the active operation of the war and when the chief task was to organize production and control activities which might help the enemy directly or indirectly, the most important ordinances of the period related to man-power. After the entry of Japan into the war when the menace to the safety of India became obvious a large number of ordinances had to be promulgated. The main principle of these was, in accordance with the first duty of the Government, to protect the law-abiding population from any outbreaks and to enable Government to act effectively. Dealing with the question of the effect of the ordinances on the powers of the High Courts, the Law Member said that the right of appeal as such was affected only in the case of 2 or 3 ordinances from among the 118 or so which had been promulgated. He gave the assurance that the Government of India would consult the Provincial Governments whether any feasible procedure could be adopted regarding the revisional powers of the High Courts. Government would also consider the removal of certain other technical difficulties in respect of the Special Courts Ordinance and the Enemy Agents Ordinance. In conclusion he pointed out that law-making in peace time and law-making during war were different. In peace-time, there was time for a leisurely examination of problems and law to a great extent was designed to regulate conditions which had already arisen. In war, speed was essential, and Government had to legislate largely for conditions which might arise but had not arisen. He declared that no one would be more pleased than the Governor-General or the Governor-General-in-Council if some of the situations envisaged in Government legislation never materialized, but wisdom demanded that Government had all its preparations made.

Moving the resolution, which he later withdrew on assurances given by the Law Member, Mr. P. N. Saprú said that the ordinances were extremely drastic and had tended to substitute a reign of the executive for a reign of law. Assuming that an emergency existed and there was need for expedition in passing them, at least they could be referred to the Legislature for ratification. He claimed that the need for judicial safeguards in the country was greater to-day than ever before and no attempt should be made to override the powers of High Courts.

The resolution was withdrawn.

AMENDMENT OF INDIA ACT 1935

Pandit Kunzru's resolution, demanding an amendment of the Government of India Act, 1935 in order to make the Section 93 provinces subject to the control of the Governor-General-in-Council instead of the Governor-General, was rejected by 7 votes to 6, Government remaining neutral. Moving the resolution, *Pandit Kunzru* said that nearly 181,000,000 Indians living in the 6 provinces now under the direct rule of Governors had no means of ventilating their grievances. Six Governors were exercising dictatorial powers. The main purpose of his resolution, he said, was to enable the Central Legislature to discuss the provincial administration.

Sir Mohammed Usman, on behalf of the Government, announced that the Government would remain neutral on the resolution. Referring to Section 93 provinces he said that the fault lay with the Congress who had gone out of office and refused to serve the country in time of its dire needs. *Sir Mohammed* claimed that under the Act the provinces were free in their own field of activities. Section 93 provided for the breakdown of the constitutional machinery and therefore it was of a temporary nature. The proposal on the other hand would acquire for the Centre powers of interference in the provincial field of administration, which was opposed to the spirit of the 1935 Act. Furthermore in cases of difference between the Centre and the Provinces, the latter would be placed at a considerable disadvantage. Giving the Government of India's view-point with regard to "discriminatory legislation" in Ceylon, Mr. G. S. Bozman, Secretary, Overseas Department, during question hour, said that there were measures on the Statute Book in Ceylon to which the Government of India had taken and still took objection. Certain administrative instructions also appeared to the Government of

India to deprive Indians in Ceylon of that equality of opportunity to which the Government of India considered them to be entitled. The Government of India had made suitable representations on all cases where they seemed to be required and were continually watching the interests of Indians in that Island.

The Council adjourned till 5-30 p.m. on Feb. 27 when the Finance Secretary, Mr. C. E. Jones, presented the Budget for the year 1943-44.

CONTROL & DISTRIBUTION OF FOODSTUFFS

2nd. MARCH :—The House took up consideration of non-official resolutions to-day. Mr. *Hossain Imam* moved a resolution urging the appointment of a committee of economists and representatives of parties in the Central Legislature to go into the question of distribution and control of prices of the necessities of life, especially foodstuffs, and to suggest remedial measures, which should be implemented by the Government. Messrs *Dalal*, *Budshah Sapru*, *Sir Shantidas Askuran*, *Sardar Bahadur Sobha Singh* and Mr. *Kalika* supported it. *Sir S. N. Roy*, War Transport Secretary, explained the position with regard to the alleged lack of transport. He did not think that the alleged wagon shortage had in any manner appreciably affected the transport of foodstuffs. Since August last the Government had been giving the highest priority to food but 3 months later a situation arose in which nothing was offered to be transported although the wagons were there. There was a tendency to put the blame on transport. It was not right or just. The Government, he said, never for a moment overlooked the urgency and the importance of transporting the people's goods. Regarding coal, he said, that everything possible was being done to improve the wagons' position and to approach the standard of quota already laid down. The Commerce Secretary, Mr. *N. R. Pillai* explained the Government's position with regard to charcoal, firewood and kerosine and cloth. He declared that cloth purchases by the Supply Department this year would be on a lower scale than last year. He considered that the setting up of a committee of the kind suggested in the resolution would be of little value because the Government were determinedly set on comprehensive plans regarding the supply of the necessities of life in this country. The Council rejected the resolution without a division.

ACCUMULATION OF STERLING RESOURCES IN U. K.

A brief debate followed on Mr. *M. N. Dalal's* resolution urging prompt and speedy measures in regard to the situation created by the huge accumulation of sterling resources in the UK and the huge expansion of the volume of currency. The discussion had not concluded when the Council adjourned till March 6.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

6th. MARCH :—The Council of State held a general discussion on the Budget today. *Sir K. V. Menon* dwelt on the urgent need of mitigating the hardship caused by the recent rise in prices, especially of foodstuffs. He had no doubt that the additional purchasing power of the public and the stationary or diminishing supply of goods available for purchase were the chief causes of the increase in prices. He welcomed the scheme for increasing food production and stressed the need of controlling prices and introducing rationing wherever necessary and feasible. He hoped the new loan would have a great anti-inflationary effect. For providing rupee finance for purchasing war supplies for the Allies in future, he thought that the experiment of floating special Government of India rupee loans was worth trying. He approved of the new taxation proposals, which in his opinion were very light.

Mr. *M. N. Dalal* said that the new taxation was high considering the poverty of the people of India. He remarked that an increase in the Corporation tax would impede the growing habit of the people towards investing in industrial and other shares. In view of the rising cost of living, he said, middle-class people were really in need of relief and, therefore, the exemption limit for income-tax should have been raised from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,500. Regarding the tobacco tax, he wanted Government to exempt country "biris." He also held the other taxes unjustifiable and said that the Government could have borrowed a little more.

Sir A. P. Patro, championing the cause of the ryots, said that the burdens imposed on them by the proposed new taxation would be very heavy. While he did not approve the tax on tobacco he hoped that Government while making rules would frame them so as to minimize their effect on the ryots. He said that the decision of HMG to continue the present financial arrangement with India was highly gratifying.

Mr. P. N. Saprú dealt with the financial settlement and declared that the fact that it was possible for us to release portions of our troops for service abroad, showed that all the troops we had in the country were not needed for local defence and it struck him that the principle of regarding them as constituting joint war measures required that the portion of the cost which was due to the expansion of the India Army for service abroad should be borne by HMG irrespective of whether these troops stayed in India or went out of India. He saw no reason why the entire cost of the British garrison should not be borne by HMG.

Mr. N. K. Das complained against both the direct and indirect taxes announced in the new Budget and said their pinch would be felt by the middle and poor classes. The Posts and Telegraphs Department was a public utility concern which was at present making profits. To further increase its profits by raising the postal rates, was entirely unjustified.

Mr. R. H. Parker could not understand how borrowing alone could have balanced the Budget. The critics of the settlement regarding war expenditure and the Lease and Lend arrangements, he said, ignored altogether the huge contributions made by Britain for India's benefit and the huge sacrifices of other members of the United Nations for the safety of India. He favoured the keeping down of prices instead of increasing wages and dearness allowances in order to provide relief to those adversely affected by the rise in the cost of living.

Mr. Hoosain Imam complained that with the exception of the Posts and Air Departments, expenditure had mounted up as compared with last year's figures of expenditure. He also protested against "the suppression of Mussalmans" in the Government of India services, in which he claimed all the higher posts were held by non-Muslims. Mr. Imam urged that HMG should take over the sterling liabilities of Burma and should give credit for them to India by reducing India's liabilities. He also wanted the remaining "agency charges" of the India Office to be borne by England. India's Supply Department was today doing agency work for Britain free of any charge. Why should not, he asked, the British Government free this country from the liability on account of India Office charges.

Pt. Hirdaynath Kunzru confined himself to military expenditure. He felt that to divide military expenditure into revenue and capital expenditure, when both the items were being financed from current revenues, was not justified. After referring to the Auditor-General's Report on Appropriation Accounts, Pt. Kunzru said that it was true that the phrase "joint war measures" did occur in the report, but he could find no evidence for the Finance Member's claim that the measures adopted and allocation of expenditure made followed from the basic principles laid down in the Indo-British defence expenditure allocation agreement. Similarly, he claimed that the increase in the expenditure on the Air Force, aerodromes and other items was not justified on the basis of that agreement. The allocation of expenditure between India and England was no longer a simplified process, nor was it according to India's capacity, which were the 2 virtues of the agreement as claimed by the Finance Member 2 years ago. Pt. Kunzru claimed that, with this experience, they did not know with what new items of defence expenditure India would be saddled next. Referring to "White troops" in this country Pandit Kunzru felt that their replacement by Indian troops would increase the number of troops 3 times. He, however, asserted that the strength of the present Army in India was kept up to reconquer Burma and Malaya both of which were Imperial concerns. It was, therefore, HMG which should bear the cost of such additional army needed for reconquering Burma.

Replying to the discussion, Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, said that it appeared to him from the course of the debate that he was widely regarded as entertaining complacent feelings on the subject of inflation and the expansion of currency. His object had been to give the country a considered and balanced view of the currency position as a whole. He did not want to give the impression that the difficulties did not call for the exercise of imagination or the finding out of some constructive remedy. He said that the difficulties mainly arose from the existing large amount of free purchasing power in the country, which could be dealt with by either borrowing or taxation. The Government of India had constantly in mind the subject of mopping up this surplus power. Another method was to use the methods of control and stabilizing prices. Experience had proved that the best method was not a simple price control; it was only effective when there was entire control over supplies, and, for a country like India, that involved the setting up of vast machinery. Sir Jeremy indicated that in wartime the ideal handling of economy could be achieved by stabilizing wages, stabilizing

prices, restricting dividends, restricting and rationing consumption and immobilizing additional purchasing power. To do all this, the powers and machinery at the disposal of a dictator were required. With the powers at his command, he said, he was doing his best to approach a wholesome ideal and he was certainly not complacent.

Sir Jeremy pointed out that a good deal had been said about the financial settlement, particularly about the use of British troops in India. The plea had been put forward that their cost should be borne by the British Government. He reminded the House that HMG and the Government of India were sharing the cost of the expansion of the land forces in India. A very important element, which should be remembered, he said, was the cost of equipment of guns, aeroplanes and tanks, which were supplied free by HMG. Only the pay and rupee expenses of the British troops while on Indian soil were borne by India, whereas the entire cost of their training and equipment was borne by HMG. Explaining the reason why defence expenditure last year had increased beyond the estimated figure, he referred to the development of the military situation. While the troops were engaged beyond the Indian border, their cost was not borne by India, but when they were actually in the country and defending the country's soil, their liability had to be borne. It was extraordinary to find that the magnitude of the defence expenditure had shocked some of the members. Replying to the criticism relating to the capital expansion of the Supply Department, Sir Jeremy Raisman said if we were able to pick and choose items which were going to be of real value to us after the war, why not bear their whole cost. The 50-50 settlement was commendable for its simplicity and equity and it saved having to go into details of what we were going to have or not. An arrangement of that kind could not be criticized as unfair to India. Coming to the question of sterling balances, he said a remark had been made that these balances should be left for the future Government of India to deal with. He did not see how any future Government was prevented from handling these balances to the advantage of India. The Government of India were anxious, he said, when thinking of a mutual aid agreement with America to see that India's fiscal policy after the war was not unduly hampered. In the post-war world there would be international economic arrangements which would tend to prevent future wars, and also prevent a return of the anarchic conditions of trade prevailing between the last and the present war and, in this world arrangement, India would surely find her rightful place and have her special economic circumstances recognized. The Council at this stage adjourned.

ACCUMULATION OF STERLING RESOURCES IN U. K.

10th. MARCH :—The Council to-day resumed discussion on Mr. *M. N. Dalal's* resolution relating to the utilization of sterling balances held in London. *Pandit Hridaynath Kunzru* through an amendment, wanted a committee of the Central Legislature to be appointed immediately to examine the best way of utilizing sterling balances in the interest of India. He claimed that the issue of sterling balances was intimately linked with inflation which was not merely an economic question. The constitutional issue overshadowed economics in this country. The Government should take immediate steps to conciliate public opinion by the transfer of political power to Indians. That alone would attract larger amounts of money to defence loans and would in its turn check inflation. Sterling balances, notwithstanding large-scale repatriations, stood at Rs. 460 crores on Feb. 12. Large sums of money on account of goods and services sold to HM's Government were still due to be paid and prolongation of the war, say by another 2 years, would further increase sterling balances in London. He suggested various proposals for utilizing sterling balances, including buying up of the remaining 3 company-managed railways, acquiring of non-Indian investments in India and securing machinery and plant for setting up in this country of machinery and machine tool industries. The Government should not repeat "the reverse councils incident" which cost India Rs. 40 crores. As for inflation, he showed by figures that the rise in prices had been steeper since March 1942. This he attributed to the expansion of currency on account of payments made in India for goods and services purchased on behalf of HM's Government. He maintained that taxation having reached a high watermark, inflation could only be checked by borrowing. This in its turn depended very largely on the solution of the political issue. He urged that in order to check effectively the growing menace of inflation, Government should take early steps to end the constitutional deadlock.

Mr. *C. E. Jones*, Secretary, Finance Department, replying on behalf of the

Government, observed that from the debate it appeared that both the sterling balances and the expansion of the currency were regarded as a menace. The argument had been advanced that the rise in prices resulted from expansion of currency and expansion of the currency was due to accumulating sterling balances. On the other hand, the House had shown its anxiety to get full value of the sterling balances. This showed that the utility of the sterling balances was in fact recognized. He emphasized that all these naturally resulted from India's huge war effort against the Axis Powers. A country at war had inevitably to face various difficult problems and one of them was expansion of currency owing to large amounts required for the raising, equipping and training of the country's armed forces. The rate of expansion of currency must follow the tempo of the war effort of a particular country. He recalled the imminent danger of land invasion and exposure to aerial attack with which India was threatened a year ago, to prepare against which a huge expenditure on defence programmes had to be incurred. Similarly the rise in prices was alone one of the direct results of the war. The greater the war effort the greater would be the rise in prices. He, however, admitted that expansion of the currency and the rise in prices did act and react over each other. Proceeding, Mr. Jones said that the statement that the growth of external assets represented sacrifice of domestic consumption by the people of India, was exaggerated. He considered these sterling balances to be largely the result of India's industrial development which had taken place owing to the war. Replying to criticism levelled against the utilization of India's sterling assets, Mr. Jones pointed out that it was baseless to regard the discharging of pensionary and other liabilities with suspicion. The whole arrangement was nothing more than the extension of the repatriation policy. Moreover, it was not proper to remain indebted on the one side and accumulate credits on the other. With regard to the constitution of a Reconstruction Fund, the Finance Secretary pointed out that the proposal was still in its early stages. He thought India would welcome this, because it would ensure a systematic and orderly flow of her capital needs in the post-war period, a period of acute scarcity the world over, in which, if the needs of the countries were not met in a systematized manner, there was a danger of the repetition of the conditions of trade prevailing after the last world war. He revealed that the proposal for a Reconstruction Fund had been referred to the Reconstruction Committee, on which are represented the Central Government, the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, the Board of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Provincial Governments, Indian States and prominent public and businessmen of the country.

Mr. *Dalal* agreed to the alterations, and the Council passed the resolution which read : "This Council recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that such measures as are possible should be taken in regard to the situation created by the accumulations of sterling resources in the UK and expansion in the volume of currency."

RATIONING OF PAPER

Mr. *Hoosain Imam*, by another resolution, recommended that paper be rationed to all consumers, including the Central and Provincial Governments, and that a small committee of Government officials and representatives of parties in the Central Legislature be formed to devise methods of economy, especially by controlling advertisements, size and copies of newspapers, exports, Central and Provincial Government publications, rules of procedure, the kind and quantity of paper manufactured by paper mills, and the Defence Department's consumption. Mr. Imam said that he wanted immediately an all-embracing action so that the situation created by the black market might be eased. Referring to newspapers, he complained that as much as 50% of space was being taken up by advertisements, particularly of goods not available in the country and of the National War Front. He also wanted total stoppage of export of paper from India. He urged standardization of certain qualities of paper to intensify production. By quoting Budget figures, he deduced that the Government were acquiring paper in excess of their demand and were, therefore, hoarding paper. In this view, rationing was the only remedy to meet the situation. Mr. *H. C. Prior*, Labour Secretary, explained the steps the Government had taken to economize paper consumption. He said that the original demand of the civil departments had been reduced by 13,000 tons in the period Oct. 1942 to March 1943 and publication of forms alone had given them a saving of 126 tons. The Government had appointed a committee to examine the question of publication of reports and effect economies. Economies in consumption of the Defence Department were also being rigorously pursued.

Mr. Imam withdrew his resolution and the Council adjourned.

OFFICIAL & NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

11th. MARCH :—The Council of State passed today 8 Bills—7 official and 1 non-official. The official Bills were adopted as passed by the Assembly, while the non-official Bill, namely, the Delhi Muslim Wakfs Bill, was slightly amended. Its passage was greeted with applause by Muslim League members.

The House generally welcomed the official Bill to amend the Indian Railways Act, 1890, which renders railways liable to pay compensation in all train accidents whether due to negligence or not but limits the liability to a maximum of Rs. 10,000 for any individual passenger.

The other 7 Bills adopted were the Bills to amend the IPC, the Currency Ordinance, the Motor Vehicles Act, the Government Savings Bank Act, the Post Office Cash Certificates Act, the Aligarh Muslim University Act, the CPO and the Coffee Market Expansion Act. The Council then adjourned.

INDIAN FINANCE BILL INTRODUCED

20th. MARCH :—The Council of State held a 2-minute sitting this evening when the Secretary laid on the table the *Indian Finance Bill*, the *Tobacco Excise Bill* and the *Vegetable Product Excise Bill*, as passed by the Assembly on Thursday and Saturday. The Council then adjourned till Mar. 24.

COMMUNAL RATIO IN GOVT. SERVICES

24th. MARCH :—The Council today rejected without a division Mr. Hossain Imam's resolution recommending to the Governor-General in Council to direct all departments of the Government of India and their attached and subordinate offices to submit annual returns showing the communal proportion of persons appointed each year, both in those departments to which the Government's communal ratio order applied and in those to which it did not apply, and to place the returns in the library of the Legislature. Mr. Imam said that the Government's resolution of 1934 regarding communal representation in the services was honoured more in the breach than in observance. When questions had been asked on the subject the Government had given "evasive" and "stereotyped" answers, as if they wanted to hide the wrongs committed. Mr. F. Conran-Smith, criticizing the resolution, as worded, said that the Government could not accept it. Had it referred only to those posts and appointments to which the resolution for communal representation applied, Government would have no objection in accepting it. He could not understand what justification there was in devoting time, money, labour, paper and printing on returns for posts and appointments to which the communal ratio order did not at all apply. He repudiated the suggestion that by giving "stereotyped" answers the Government were concealing something. He said the Government would gladly give all the information asked for if there had been no demands on time and labour owing to the war. Mr. Conran-Smith assured the House that Government were seeing to it that their order on communal representation was duly observed. He also pointed to the Government's instructions in the matter of promotions, which were issued in Sept last. The resolution was rejected without a division.

LAWS FOR RELIEF TO AGRICULTURISTS

Sardar Nihal Singh moved his resolution recommending the introduction of legislation at an early date to effect uniformity of laws in the various provinces of the country to prevent alienation of agricultural lands, relief of indebted agriculturists by advance of loans without interest; and enforcement of the law of *Dandi-pat* in respect of all debts advanced to agriculturists. Sir Jogendra Singh said that the matter was primarily the concern of the provinces. The resolution was withdrawn.

The Council also passed the Reciprocity Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly.

CONDITION OF ASSAM TEA-GARDEN WORKERS

Mr. P. N. Saprú moved his resolution urging the appointment of a mixed committee of officials and non-officials, with adequate representation of labour therein, to investigate the conditions of work and living, rates of wages and methods of recruitment, of workers in the Assam tea gardens. The Leader of the House, Sir Mohd. Usman having agreed to allot another day for the further discussion of this resolution and Pt Kunzru's resolution recommending that members of the Legislature should be treated as visitors to jails and camps where security prisoners

are detained, further discussion was thereupon postponed and the House adjourned.

INDIAN FINANCE BILL DEBATE

25th. MARCH :—The Indian Finance Bill, as passed by the Lower House, came up for consideration in the Council today. Support to the idea of forming a united national opposition in and outside the Legislature, in order to force the hands of the Government to concede power to India was given by Pt. H. N. Kunzru, who spoke for 1½ hours. Quoting pronouncements by Mr. Churchill and other spokesmen of the British Government, Pt Kunzru said : "The indications are that they hold out no promise of the establishment of a free government in this country either now or in any measurable time." Stressing the need for constitutional advance and the solution of the political deadlock in the country, he said that Britain had "accused us of taking advantage of her difficulties, but the boot was on the other leg." In his opinion, India could more legitimately accuse Britain of hardening her attitude towards this country and strengthening her resolve not to part with power owing to an improvement in her military situation. He commented on the Viceroy's reference to the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935 in his Calcutta speech of December last and asked if the Viceroy had shown any keenness or desire to be constructive since then. Had a Federal Government been established at the Centre, India's position would have been much stronger." He criticized the publication of the "Congress Responsibility" pamphlet, which, according to him, hardly contained any matter of which the public was not already aware. He asked what was the good of publishing it when it did not contain anything new and if all that was valuable was too confidential to be published. If the object had been to impress U.S. public opinion the Government had even failed in that, as borne out by Sir Mohd. Zafrulla's Press interview. Pt Kunzru maintained that Government had indulged in exaggeration and tried to pile up charges against Mr. Gandhi who was summed up as pro-Japanese. Pt Kunzru expressed dissatisfaction with the result of the Arakan campaign. Glad at the expansion of the Indian Air Force, which was in the hands of Indians from top to bottom, Pt Kunzru said its size was still small. After referring to the paucity of Indian Staff Officers at GHQ. and the large number of European officers attached to certain units, he replied to the Government's assertion that "sufficient number of candidates with the requisite qualifications were not applying for emergency commissions," by saying that the political situation in the country was to some extent responsible for holding back qualified young men from training as military officers.

Earlier in his speech, Pt Kunzru dealt with the expansion of currency, and the utilization of India's sterling balances. He asked Government to take over the 3 remaining railways under companies, and to acquire port trusts, improvement trusts and other European-owned public utility concerns with these sterling balances and also nationalize the oil and coal industries in India.

26th. MARCH :—Mr. Hoosain Imam, who opposed the bill to-day, claimed that the Government had failed to popularize the Central Executive. Concluding his over-night speech, he detailed a 5-point charge sheet against the Government : First, he said, the Government had not reached a decision on capitation charges, though the question had been pending since 1939 : 2nd. the apportionment of capital defence expenditure was one-sided without any sanction from HMG : 3rd., the Government had misconceived the idea of financial settlement under which Britain was trying to foist the maximum financial burden on India : 4th., the manner in which India's resources were being handed over to Britain did not do credit to the India Government ; and 5th., he objected to the way the Government were treating the Central Assembly in regard to adjournment motions. Mr. P. N. Sapru said that the winning of freedom was the paramount problem before them, and although he would deeply regret a partition of India, he held that questions like the geographical unity of India which in itself was a creation of a foreign power, were of secondary importance. He also claimed that the apportioning of responsibility for the August disturbances was of minor importance. The more important question was the transference of power to Indians.

An appeal to the country to unite in the demand for Federation was made by Sir Jogendra Singh, Member, Education, Health and Lands. He said that the presence of Indians in the Viceroy's Executive Council was a harbinger of coming events, when India's Government would be completely in the hands of Indians. At present England and India were partners in the great cause of world peace, and that partnership guaranteed peace and symbolized independence. The unity symbolized in

India's Army, the War Effort and the National War Front provided the foundation of Federation, which must come to serve now and for the future peace. After referring to the perils that threatened India and the need for making a united effort to avert those perils, he said : "Let an appeal go out from all India that Federation should be brought into action and let us build from stage to stage that Federation till we get independence, which is what India desires. He considered that that independence would create a sense of inter-dependence and perhaps draw close India and England together, and it might bring other countries also to the great fold of world peace and world order, guaranteeing security and progress.

Rai Bahadur S. K. Das urged the Government to take energetic steps to improve the food situation in the country. He also asked for relief to labour in the interest of the successful prosecution of the war.

Mr. M. Padshah said that India, while having no grouse about its present Defence expenditure, wanted to be spared from being over-burdened and he therefore supported the demand that a ceiling be fixed for it. He protested against the position of Muslims in the Services and said that there had been hardly any improvement in their position, in spite of the Home Department resolution on communal representation and the periodical promises made by the Government in the Legislature.

Mr. V. V. Kalikar maintained that Britain, whose agent the Government of India was, had failed in its duty to give attention to the establishment of major war industries in India. If the Government had taken proper care of that, he said, there would have been no need to place orders abroad for new types of aeroplanes, heavy machinery, etc. "There is no use finding fault with the British Government for not resolving the political deadlock. The solution is in the hands of the people," declared *Sir Mohd. Usman*, Leader of the House. "When there is no agreement between all the important communities and interests, the transfer of power into the hands of a very anti-British and pro-Japanese party will land the country in utter confusion and chaos." Was this the time, he asked, to try this experiment when the whole country was engaged in a life and death struggle? He said that six months after the rebellion of August last when *Mr. Gandhi* saw that there was no chance of Congress capturing the Government of this country, and did not like the Allied victories, he began his fast with the object of coercing the Government to come to terms with him. When the Government of India stood firm and refused to yield, *Mr. Gandhi* recovered from his fast. *Sir Mohd.* maintained that some political leaders who believed in the Gandhian policy of "quit India" and indirectly carried on his work, made statements and speeches which would not only go against the war effort of this country but would also directly help the enemy. The censorship was thoroughly justified. Some of the members opposite, went on *Sir Mohd.*, had great faith in the democratic form of Government. They found fault with the present Government of India for not being representative—as if India had enjoyed before the advent of the British in this country a democratic and representative form of Government. Recently we had witnessed the fate of democracy in this country. The moment the Congress Governments resigned in the provinces, it was an occasion of great festivity throughout the whole country, ending in the celebration of "Deliverance Day." Parliamentary democracy was not an indigenous institution. It had been imported from England to India and, in his opinion, had been a thorough failure in some of the provinces on account of the attitude of the Congress. The Leader of the House continued : "It is to be regretted that the Opposition is now getting into the habit of constantly abusing and attacking the British Government. It does no good to anybody. *Mr. Amery* has rightly said that the British people need not be ashamed of the great services they have rendered to this country. To mention some of them, they have introduced into this country the British system of education, the British system of justice and British parliamentary institutions and maintained law and order in this country. The majority of the people of this country realize and recognize the great work accomplished by Britain in India and are very grateful to them." About the criticism that the Muslims and the minorities were not properly represented in the Services, he gave the assurance that no administrative department could ignore their claims to a proper share in the administration of the country.

During the 3rd reading of the Bill there were heated exchanges between *Sir Mohammed Usman* and members of the Opposition led by *Pt Kunzru*, *Mr. Sapru* and *Mr. Kalikar* who entered vehement protests against *Sir Mohammed's* observations on the failure of democracy in India. *Pt Kunzru* said that *Sir*

Mohammed had made it appear that the British Government were opposed to the establishment of democracy in India. He wanted to know whether that was the considered view of the India Government and whether they regarded all criticism as incitement to violence. He added that Indianization of the Council was a "curse." Mr. *Kalihar* asserted that if Sir Mohammed was responsible to the House he would not have made those observations. The fault lay with the system. Mr. *Sapru* said that the statement made by Sir Mohammed would have to be repudiated by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery. Mr. *Hossain Imam* said that Muslims did not believe in the western form of democracy and he therefore did not find fault with Sir Mohammed. He blamed the Sapru Conference for the Council expansion. Sir *Mohammed* reiterated that democracy had failed in India because Muslims would have nothing to do with it. It was not his fault if it were not palatable to some members.

With regard to martial law in Sind, the Deputy-C-in-C, Gen *Sir Alan Hartley*, said that it would be withdrawn as soon as the Hur menace was eliminated completely and the local police was strengthened adequately for the purpose of maintaining order. He related the circumstances in which martial law was declared at the request of the Sind Government and the difficulties the troops and the police had to contend against. He said : "Intensive operations by military and police over the ten months have done a great deal to break the Hur rebellion, arrest Hur leaders, destroy gangs of criminals and restore public confidence. On account of the difficulties of terrain and the large areas involved, it was found necessary to employ aircraft to assist the troops and police in the location of gangs, patrolling of communications and protection of isolated localities against sabotage. Allegations that aircraft have used explosive bombs are quite untrue and had already been denied." Gen *Hartley* said that Pir Pagaro had a fair trial in the military court. The Government had engaged at its own expense a well-known and leading advocate of Hyderabad to defend the Pir. Every facility was given to him to cite witnesses for the defence and the trial was a lengthy one, lasting 26 days. Gen *Hartley* countered Pt *Kunzru's* remark that "the Army was the chief agency which fostered racial feeling," by saying that it was the chief agency which fostered racial fellowship. There was hardly a race or caste or creed in the whole of this sub-continent which had not some representatives in the present day Indian Army. He said : "This best body of human beings, of different creeds, castes and races live together, work together and do their duties together in perfect amity. I should have thought, and I believe, that most members of this House will agree with me that the Indian Army is an example for the whole of India, as a symbol of Indian unity." Replying to the allegation that racial discrimination was one of the reasons why suitable Indian candidates were not coming forward for emergency commissions, Gen *Hartley* said that if the reference was to differences in pay, he would only remark that the pay of the ICO in India was exactly the same as the pay of the British Service Officer in England ; in fact, it was some what higher in the earlier stages. He hoped this would be regarded as a fair basis for fixing remuneration. "We always set our face," he declared, "against what may be construed as discrimination in general treatment." In order to assist soldiers after the war to adjust themselves to civil life, he said, in addition to deferred pay, the Government credited amounts equivalent to deferred pay to a reconstruction fund, to be devoted for schemes for the permanent welfare of the soldiers. There were also other saving schemes which were nearing finality and about which announcement would be shortly made. Referring to airfields, he said they had been sited with a view to the most efficient prosecution of the war, both for the defence of India and also for operations against enemy-occupied territory. It would not be right to allow considerations as to the peace-time utilization of such airfields to detract from operational efficiency ; but, subject to paramount operational needs, a considerable number of airfields had in fact been so sited as to make them extremely useful for communication in peace-time.

The Commerce Secretary, Mr. *N. R. Pillai* announced that the Government had decided to publish the report of the "fact finding committee" relating to the handloom industry. They had also under consideration a scheme for the proper control and distribution of yarn. Referring to industrial development since the war, Mr. *Pillai* said that their policy had been to scrutinize every item of import and to see whether import could not be substituted by local production, with regard to availability of raw materials, economic production and possibilities of post-war survival. Among non-ferrous metals a notable example of development was the production of aluminium. There had been substantial development in the

field of chemicals and many articles which were hitherto imported were now being produced in India. Their cost of production showed that they would be able to face post-war competition. Mr. Pillai particularly mentioned safety razors, the production of which had been developed at a number of centres and was sufficient to meet the vast requirements of the Defence Services and which would in peacetime go a long way towards meeting civilian demand. Referring to post-war plans he said that six sub-committees of the Reconstruction Committee had recently been set up to deal with the different aspects of the problem.

Referring to criticism relating to grants for Provincial Police. Mr. C. E. Jones, Finance Secretary said that the principle was approved by the Standing Finance Committee as early as September 1930. The dangers from external aggression and internal commotion were so real and grave then that the India Government had advised the provinces to proceed with the scheme regardless of expense and that they would share in the cost of the additional security measures. As for Mr. Hossain Imam's suggestion that the Reserve Bank should not buy sterling at rates in excess of the official rate, Mr. Jones said that in the opinion of the Government, operations of the Central Bank should not be carried on primarily with a view to profit. As for depreciation allowance, he said that the Government's schedule had been framed after a conference with the interests concerned. There had been no complaints until EPT was introduced. The Government would strenuously resist all attempts to secure a higher depreciation allowance, because they were convinced that depreciation of plant and machinery had no relation to working of shifts. If, however, in individual cases it was proved to the satisfaction of the Government that the basic rate was inadequate, the Government would give their favourable consideration to these cases. Referring to the shortage of small coins, he gave figures to show how the output had increased in recent months. Mints were working 24 hours at considerable risk to plant and machinery. A 3rd mint was expected to commence work by June. He also expected active public co-operation to safeguard the poor man's interest. Mr. Jones regretted that it was not in the interests of India to give details of Silver sales. The Silver market was an extremely sensitive and speculative market, which reacted on other markets and any disclosure of Silver transactions was bound to have serious repercussions all round.

Dealing with currency expansion and inflation, the Finance Secretary said that the operation of two factors, speculation and fear of invasion, was bound to result in a general rise in prices. He claimed that the present expansion of currency did not justify the extent of the rise in prices. In recent months people in increasing numbers were writing and speaking on this problem and were using phrases such as "inflation" which created what might be called an "inflation psychology." This was having a serious effect on the ignorant masses. The Government were fully aware of the potential dangers of such a situation, and would not hesitate to take effective steps to deal with it. They were determined to use all the resources at their command and he hoped that the Council would lend its full support to any anti-inflation measure the Government might bring in the future. War saving was the crux of the problem, declared Mr. Jones. The obvious way was to mobilize the resources of the country and return money to the Government in the form of loans. Those who generally cited the UK and the USA should know that war saving was the only method by which prices were being kept in check there. The existence of external assets would provide for resumption of the import trade and automatic contraction of currency. Increase in currency was therefore only a temporary phase. Mr. Jones asserted that sterling would not depreciate after the war as was feared by some persons. As for "joint war measures," he said that the term was used by the Finance Member two years ago. He, however, claimed that the result of the financial settlement was all to India's good. India for instance would be able to show that she had paid off her foreign debt and had created a sufficient reserve to rehabilitate her industries after the war. The public debt of India had increased to a moderate extent. India would be able to show considerable progress in industrial expansion and would have trained personnel to man her industries.

THE TOBACCO EXCISE BILL

29th. MARCH:—The Council of State today adopted without a division the Tobacco Excise Bill and the Vegetable Product Excise Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly. The Opposition challenged a division on the motion for consideration of the Tobacco Bill but was defeated by 21 votes to 11.

Opposition criticism against the Tobacco Bill was that it imposed not only an

additional burden on the poor consumer but excessive responsibilities on growers. They also expressed the apprehension that cultivation of tobacco might be given up altogether by a large number of growers, who would not like to sow a crop which would involve them in risks and troubles. The fear was also expressed by Pandit *H. N. Kunzru* that a premium would be placed on the cultivation of tobacco by capitalists on small cultivators. He also questioned the validity of the Bill as agriculture seemed to him a matter entirely under the control of the Provinces.

Reiterating why his party were opposed to the bill, Mr. *Hossain Imam*, Leader of the Muslim League Party said that they were not going to support any taxation measure because the Government had not given them a share in the government of the country. He referred to Mr. *Fazlul Huq's* resignation and said pointers were coming up daily and proof multiplied to show the popularity of the League and the unanimity with which it was representing the cause of Muslims.

Mr. *Shavar A. Lal*, Deputy Secretary, Legislative Department, referring to the constitutional validity of the Bill, quoted an authority on the Canadian Constitution which was similar to the Indian Constitution to prove that any measure which impinged on the Provincial sphere was to the extent of ensuring the success of an essential Federal measure, "intra vires" of the Federal authority. He said the provisions of the Bill had been brought to the notice of the Provincial Governments and none of them had questioned any of the provisions.

Replying to the debate, Mr. *Harry Greenfield*, Director of Central Excises explained the whole system of licencing and returns and said the Government was anxious to get the growers on their side. He assured the House that the rules would be worked lightly for the cultivators and that they should look forward to reaping the benefit of the scheme for the improvement of tobacco cultivation as early as possible. The House then adjourned.

INDIAN TEA CONTROL AMEND. BILL

30th. MARCH:—The Council of State this morning adopted the official Bill to amend further the Indian Tea Control Act as passed by the Assembly.

ASSAM TEA LABOUR

The House then resumed discussion on Mr. *P. N. Saprú's* resolution recommending the appointment of a committee to investigate the conditions of work and living, rates of wages, and methods of recruitment of workers in Assam tea gardens. The resolution was rejected without a division. Mr. *H. C. Prior*, Secretary, Labour Department, expressed sympathy with the resolution and declared that the Government of India considered that an enquiry of the kind suggested was necessary not only to investigate conditions of Labour on tea gardens in Assam, but also on other plantation areas in India but the inquiry could only be taken up when the time was opportune. The reason why the Government were not able to accept the resolution at the present time was that the time was inopportune for conducting such an inquiry when the war and defence were uppermost in the minds of everybody in E. India. Moreover, in the interests of labour itself, an inquiry in the present abnormal times was not suitable to get a fair picture of the real conditions of the responsibility of holding an inquiry at the earliest opportune time.

VISIT TO SECURITY PRISONERS

Pandit *H. N. Kunzru* moved a resolution recommending to the Governor-General in Council to suggest to Provincial Governments that members of the Central Legislature should be treated as visitors to jails and camps in their constituencies where security prisoners were detained and allowed to perform the same functions for such prisoners as non-official visitors did for ordinary prisoners. The resolution was withdrawn after the Home Secretary, Mr. *E. Conran Smith* had explained the Government's viewpoint. The Home Secretary claimed that there was no difference of opinion between the Government and the Pandit as far as the question of non-official visitors visiting detenus including Congress security prisoners was concerned. The difference, however, lay in the personnel of non-official visitors. The Government maintained that the members of the Central Legislature had no special qualification for that type of work except if the object of the resolution was to discuss policies with Congress detenus. This, however, was not permitted under the rules governing non-official visitors. Furthermore, in some Provinces members of Provincial Legislatures were already appointed ex-officio non-official visitors to jails, and the Government saw no reason to superimpose on them or supplement them by members of the Central Legislature. If, however, the object of appointing members of the Central Legislature as non-official visitors to

jails was to amend or modify the jail rules, even then the Central Legislature was not the proper place to achieve that object, jail rules being entirely a Provincial subject. He disclosed that in the Chief Commissioners' Provinces non-official visitors were permitted to visit detenus including Congress security prisoners and the Government were prepared to advise the Provincial Governments to do the same. The Government agreed that there should be non-official visitors for security prisoners. The Council at this stage adjourned till April 1.

HINDU SUCCESSION BILL

1st. APRIL :—The Council of State to-day concurred in the resolution passed in the Legislative Assembly recommending that the Bill to amend and modify the Hindu law relating to intestate succession be committed to a joint committee of the Central Legislature. The Council elected the following to serve on the committee. Pandit H. N. Kunzru, Mr. P. N. Saprú, Rai Bahadur Sri Narayan Mahta, Mr. V. V. Kalikar, Mr. Sushil Kumar Roy Chaudhuri, Sir A. P. Patro, Sardar Bahadur Sirdar Sobha Singh, Mr. Hossain Imam and Mr. Shavax A. Lal.

Recommending to the House his motion for reference of the Bill to a select committee Mr. *Shavax A. Lal*, Deputy Secretary, Legislative Department, said if complete unanimity in a community was to be a condition for bringing forward a reformatory legislation it was tantamount to total prohibition of that legislation. Pandit *H. N. Kunzru* said that bare justice required that the status of a daughter should be raised and that she should have both in her father's and father-in-law's house greater independence than at present. He considered it his duty to support the principles underlying the Bill. He refuted the charge of haste brought against the Government and the Rao Committee and said the latter's recommendation for the codification of Hindu law in successive stages was amply supported by Hindus. The Bill had therefore been drafted in deference to eminent Hindu opinion in the country. He appreciated "the statesmanlike attitude of the Law Member," who had given several assurances to the opponents of the Bill. He did not think the Government could have taken a more reasonable view than that. *Sir Sultan Ahmed*, Law Member, replying remarked that much that he had to say had been said by Pandit Kunzru. He was not at all going to apologize for the legislation; on the other hand, he considered it a privilege that he brought forward a legislation which was bound to improve the status of this country both internally and internationally. He related the circumstances since 1937 under which the Government undertook to bring forward this legislation, not of their own volition but faced with a barrage of private Bills on the subject of improving the position of a daughter. On the question of the removal of sex disqualification he would have no compromise. He challenged the critics to show him any "srut" proving that women could not hold property. If they could, he would instantly withdraw the Bill. He said by passing this legislation they would have met both the internal and external charges levelled against Indians with regard to the treatment of Hindu women and their rights. When the *President* put the motion to the vote, no one opposed it. The House adjourned till the 3rd. April.

MILITARY PRISONS BILL

3rd. APRIL :—The Council of State adopted to-day the Military Prisons Bill, the Trade Marks Bill and the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act (Amendment) Bill, as passed by the Central Assembly.

During consideration of the Military Prisons Bill, Pandit *H. N. Kunzru* asked whether the military authorities were thinking of making rules for the appointment of non-official visitors to military prisons. In several provinces, even at the present time, non-officials had been appointed as visitors to civil jails. If military prisons were established and people who had formerly been confined in civil prisons were to be confined in these military prisons, it was desirable that there should be some means by which their grievances could be ascertained in the same way as those of the civil prisoners.

The Deputy C-in-C. General *Sir Alan Hartley*, replying, said that as far as he was aware, no such suggestion had ever been made. As regards British military prisons in this country, there were military visitors who were responsible for visiting these prisons and hearing complaints and seeing that the prisoners were properly treated; and similarly Indian prisoners would have military and or air force officers as visitors.

The Council at this stage concluded its Budget Session and adjourned *sine die*.

The Central Legislative Assembly

List of Members

President :—The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I.

Elected—Non-Officials—(102).

(1) Madras—16.

1. G. RANGIAH NAIDU, Esq., M.L.A.
2. K. S. GUPTA, Esq., M.L.A.
3. A. SATYANARAYANA MOORTHY, Esq., M.L.A.
4. PROF. N. G. RANGA, M.L.A.
5. M. ANANTHASAYANAM AYYANGAR, Esq., M.L.A.
6. T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR, Esq., M.L.A.
7. K. SITARAMA REDDIAR, Esq., M.L.A.
8. T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI, Esq., M.L.A.
9. SHRIMATI K. RADHA BAI SUBBARAYAN, M.L.A.
10. SRI K. B. JINARAJA HEGDE, M.L.A.
11. UMAR ALY SHAH, Esq., M.L.A.
12. MAULVI SYED MURTUZA SAHIB BAHADUR, M.L.A.
13. H. A. SATHAR H. ESSAK SAIT, Esq., M.L.A.
14. SIR F. E. JAMES, O.B.E., M.L.A.
15. RAJA T. MANAVEDAN, M.L.A.
16. SAMI VENCATACHELAM CHETTY, Esq., M.L.A.

(2) Bombay—16.

17. DR. G. V. DESHMUKH, M.L.A.
18. SIR COWASJEE JEHANGIR, BART., K.C.I.E., O.B.E., M.L.A.
19. DIWAN LALCHAND NAVALKAR, M.L.A.
20. BHULABHAI JIVANJI DESAI, Esq., M.L.A.
21. HOOSAINBHAY A. LALLJEE, Esq., M.L.A.
22. JAMNADAS M. MEHTA, Esq., M.L.A.
23. RAJMAL LAKHICHAND ESQ., M.L.A.
24. S. K. HOSMANI, Esq., M.L.A.
25. MAHOMED ALI JINNAH, Esq., M.L.A.
26. NABI BAKSH ILLAHI BAKHSH BHUTTO, Esq., M.L.A.
27. SETH YUSUF ABDULLA HAROON, M.L.A.
28. H. G. STOKES, Esq., O.B.E., M.L.A.
29. E. L. C. GWILT, Esq., M.L.A.
30. MANU SUBEDAR, Esq., M.L.A.
31. KHAN BAHADUR MIAN GHULAM KADIR MD. SHAHBAN, M.L.A.
32. SIR VITHAL N. CHANDAVARKAR, M.L.A.

(3) Bengal—17.

33. N. C. CHUNDER, Esq., M.L.A.
34. DR. P. N. BANERJEE, M.L.A.
35. BABU AMARENDRA NATH CHATTOPADHYAYA, M.L.A.
36. PANDIT LAKSHMI KANTA MAITRA, M.L.A.
37. K. C. NEOGY, Esq., M.L.A.
38. AKHIL CHANDRA DATTA, Esq., M.L.A.

39. SIR ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I., M.L.A.
40. HAJEE CHOWDHURY MOHAMMUD ISMAIL KHAN, M.L.A.
41. SIR ABDUL HALIM GHUZNANI, M.L.A.
42. CHOWDHURY MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN, M.L.A.
43. SHAIKH RAFIUDDIN AHMAD SIDDIQUEE, M.L.A.
44. DR. HABIBAR RAHMAN, M.L.A.
45. C. C. MILLER, Esq., M.L.A.
46. C. P. LAWSON, Esq., M.L.A.
47. T. CHAPMAN-MORTIMER, Esq., M.L.A.
48. SRIJUT DHIRENDR KANTA LAHIRI CHAUDHURY, M.L.A.
49. BABU BAIJNATH BAJORIA, M.L.A.

(4) United Provinces—16.

50. RAM RATAN GUPTA, Esq., M.L.A.
51. CHOUDHRI RAGHUBIR NARAIN SINGH, M.L.A.
52. PANDIT SRI KRISHNA DUTTA PALIWAL, M.L.A.
53. BADRI DATT PANDE, Esq., M.L.A.
54. SRI PRAKASA, Esq., M.L.A.
55. KHEEDAN LAL, Esq., M.L.A.
56. SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA, M.L.A.
57. RAJA JAGDAMBIKA PRATAP NARAIN SINGH, M.L.A.
- SIR SYED RAZA ALI. O.B.E., M.L.A.
- QAZI MOHAMMAD AHMAD KAZMI, M.L.A.
60. SIR MUHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN, C.I.E., M.L.A.
61. NAWABZADA MUHAMMAD LIAQUAT ALI KHAN, M.L.A.
62. DR. SIR ZIA UDDIN AHMAD, C.I.E., M.L.A.
- MOHAMED AZHAR ALI, Esq., M.L.A.
- B. L. GRAY, Esq., M.L.A.
- RAJA BAHADUR KUSHAL PAL SINGH, M.L.A.
66. LALA SHAM LAL, M.L.A.
67. RAIZADA HANS RAJ, M.L.A.
68. BHAI PARMA NAND, M.L.A.
69. SYED GHULAM BHIK NAIRANG, M.L.A.
70. MAULANA ZAFAR ALI KHAN, M.L.A.
71. H. M. ABDULLAH, Esq., M.L.A.
72. NAWAB SAHIBZADA SAYAD SIR MOHAMMAD MEHR SHAH, M.L.A.
73. KHAN BAHADUR SHAIKH FAZI-I-HAQ PIRACHA, M.L.A.
74. KHAN BAHADUR NAWAB MAKHDUM MURID HOSSAIN QURESHI, M.L.A.
75. SARDAR MANGAL SINGH, M.L.A.
76. SARDAR SANT SINGH, M.L.A.
77. M. GHIAUDDIN, Esq., M.L.A.
- (6) Bihar and Orissa—12.
78. SATYA NARAYAN SINHA, Esq., M.L.A.

79. BABU HARI SHARAN PRASAD
SRIVASTAVA, M.L.A.
80. B. DAS, ESQ., M.L.A.
81. PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS, M.L.A.,
82. RAMAYAN PRASAD, ESQ., M.L.A.,
83. GAURI SHANKAR SINGH, ESQ., M.L.A.,
84. KAILASH BIHARI LALL, ESQ., M.L.A.,
85. BABU RAM NARAYAN SINGH, M.L.A.,
86. MUHAMMAD NAUMAN, ESQ., M.L.A.,
87. MUHAMMAD AHSAN, ESQ., M.L.A.
88. MAULVI MOHAMMAD ABDUL GANI
89. MAHARAJA BAHADUR RAM RAN
VIJAI PRASAD SINGH, M.L.A.,

(7) Central Provinces and Berar—6.

90. GOVIND VINAYEKRAO DESHMUKH,
ESQ., M.L.A.,
91. SETH GOVIND DAS, M.L.A.
92. PANDIT SHAMBHULAL MISRA,
M.L.A.,
93. NAWAB SIDDIQUE ALI KHAN, M.L.A.
94. SETH SHEODASS DAGA, M.L.A.,
95. WAMAN GOPAL JOSHI ESQ., M.L.A.,

(8) Assam—4.

96. KULADHAR CHALIHA, ESQ., M.L.A.,
97. SREEJUKTA ANANGA MOHAN DAM,
98. ABDUR RASHEED CHOUDHURY, ESQ.,
99. P. J. GRIFFITHS, ESQ., C. I. E. M.L.A.,

(9) Delhi—1.

100. M. ASAF ALI, ESQ., M.L.A.,

(10) Ajmer-Merwara—1.

101. RAI BAHADUR SETH BHAGCHAND
SONI, O.B.E., M.L.A.

(11) North-West Frontier Province—1.

102. ABDUL QAIYUM, ESQ., M.L.A.,
NOMINATED—(39).

(a) Officials—(20).

103. THE HON'BLE SIR REGINALD
MAXWELL, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
104. THE HON'BLE SIR JEREMY
RAISMAN, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
105. THE HON'BLE DEWAN BAHADUR
SIR ARCOT RAMASWAMI MUDALIAR,
K.C.S.I.,
106. THE HON'BLE SIR SULTAN AHMED,
107. THE HON'BLE SIR JWALA PRASAD
SRIVASTAVA, K.B.E.,
108. THE HON'BLE SIR EDWARD
CHARLES BENTHALL
109. THE HON'BLE DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

110. THE HON'BLE SIR M. AZIZUL
HUQUE, C.I.E.,
111. THE HON'BLE DR. N. B. KHARE
112. THE HON'BLE SIR ASOKA ROY
113. ZAHID HUSSAIN, ESQ., C.I.E. M.L.A.,
114. SIR GEORGE SPENCE, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.,
M.L.A.,
115. SIR GURUNATH BEWOOR, C.I.E.,
M.L.A.,
116. J. D. TYSON, ESQ., C.B.E., M.L.A.,
117. C. M. TRIVEDI, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.,
O.B.E., M.L.A.,
118. L. J. D. WAKELY, ESQ., M.B.E.,
M.L.A.,
119. DR. N. G. ABHYANKAR, ESQ.,
M.L.A.,
120. DR. T. G. P. SPEAR, M.L.A.,
121. Y. N. SUKTHANKAR, ESQ., C.I.E.,
M.L.A.,
122. H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.I.E., M.L.A.,

(b) Non-Officials—(19).

123. SARDAR BAHADUR SARDAR SIR
JAWAHAR SINGH, C.I.E., M.L.A.,
124. N. M. JOSHI, ESQ., M.L.A.,
125. DR. SIR RATANJI DINSHAW DALAL,
C.I.E., M.L.A.,
126. MAJOR NAWAB SIR AHMAD NAWAZ
KHAN, C.I.E., O.B.E., M.L.A.,
127. RAO BAHADUR N. SIVA RAJ, M.L.A.,
128. "SHANS-UL-'ULEMA" KAMALUDDIN
AHMAD, M.L.A.,
129. MUHAMMAD MUAZZAM SAHIB
BAHADUR, M.L.A.,
130. SETH SUNDER LALL DAGA, M.L.A.,
131. KUNWAR HAJEE ISMAIEL ALIKHAN.
132. HONY. CAPTAIN SARDAR BAHADUR
DALPAT SINGH, O.B.I., I.O.M., M.L.A.,
133. SAIYID HAIDAR IMAM, ESQ., M.L.A.,
134. MAJOR THAKUR SINGH, M.C., O.B.I.,
M.L.A.,
135. SIR HENRY RICHARDSON, M.L.A.,
136. KHAN BAHADUR SHAMSUDDIN
HAIDER, O.B.E., M.L.A.,
137. FRANK R. ANTHONY, ESQ., M.L.A.,
138. MRS. RENUKA RAY, M.L.A.,
139. KHAN BAHADUR SHEIKH HABIBUR
RAHMAN, M.L.A.,
140. PRINCIPAL S. C. CHATTERJI, M.L.A.,
141. PIARA LALL KUREEL TALIB, ESQ.,
M.L.A.,

Proceedings of the Assembly

Budget Session—New Delhi—10th. February to 2nd. April 1943

SHORTAGE OF SMALL COINS

The Central Legislative Assembly commenced its Budget Session at New Delhi on the 10th. February 1943. The news of Mr. Gandhi's fast became known just about the time the House was assembling and members received it with grave, and for the most part, silent concern. Mr. *William Phillips*, President Roosevelt's representative was in the Distinguished Visitors' Gallery.

The House discussed Mr. *Bajinath Bajoria's* adjournment motion on the "failure of the Government of India to cope with the serious situation created by the shortage of small coins." Members of the Muslim League and Nationalist parties voted for the motion which was rejected by 32 votes to 26. Mr. Bajoria, in his speech, asked for a categorical answer to the question whether Government minted small coins for Australia. He asked for rigorous punishment for hoarding but not of people who kept small quantities of coins.

In his reply to the debate, the Finance Member, *Sir Jeremy Raisman* stated that the existing 2 mints, one in Bombay and another in Calcutta were working 24 hours a day, turning out small coins at the rate of 125,000,000 pieces a month and it was hoped that when the 3rd mint was put up the output would be increased by 50,000,000 pieces a month. Government had ample stock of metal and would go on turning small coins out as long as the demand was there. On the preventive side, he mentioned the recent Ordinances designed to facilitate detection of hoarding and punishment of hoarders. Referring to the complaint of minting coins for other countries, *Sir Jeremy* said that the minting of small coins was a lucrative operation and foreign orders for minting were accepted at a time when it was not expected that conditions would become so acute in India. In any case, foreign orders absorbed less than 1% of our capacity, and Government had slowed them down to the minimum.

PAPER CONTROL ORDER

11th. FEBRUARY:—The Assembly to-day passed by 32 votes to 28, Mr. *Bajinath Bajoria's* adjournment motion to censure Government on their Paper Control Order. The Nationalist Party, the Muslim League and the Europeans voted for the motion. Mr. Bajoria, initiating the debate, drew attention to the great hardship caused by the order requisitioning 90 per cent of paper manufactured in India. Mr. Bajoria explained that pre war Indian production of paper amounted to 96,000 tons annually and the civil consumption then was 199,000 tons annually. This consumption had been reduced to 10 per cent, which would amount to about 19,000 a year. This worked out to about 4.8 per cent of pre-war consumption. The Government consumption, on the other hand, had increased by 432 per cent since the war began. He admitted that the Government had cut down their demand by 10 per cent, but there was still considerable room for economies. *Sir Frederick James* characterised the Government of India a "Paper Government" and asserted it had not yet begun to exercise any economies in paper consumption. He referred to the "wastage" in the P. W. D., the Information Department, particularly in its publication, *Indian Information* and the Government generally in the publication of the Gazette of India and the Legislative Assembly Department. *Sir Frederick* suggested that on the British model the Government of India should appoint a Paper Economy Committee of non-officials to assist the Government in the paper economy campaign and that the Paper Control Order should be rigidly enforced.

The Labour Member, *Dr. Ambedkar*, replying to the debate, explained that the Paper Control Order was merely a freezing and not a requisitioning order. The order was served on the mills and not on the stockists. The implication of these two factors was that the Paper Controller could allow the mills to sell more than 10 per cent to the public and the public itself could buy its supplies from stockists and hoarders of paper. Explaining the immediate causes for passing the order, *Dr. Ambedkar* said that in the first six months, April to September, Government demand for paper amounted to 34,000 tons. It was found that the mills had already delivered 16,000 tons. The Government had contracted for 25,400 tons of paper from the mills. The Government, therefore, were left with 9,000 tons to carry on for six months. They therefore revised their estimates and unified their

methods of requisitioning paper. The position at the end of October was that the Government demand amounted to 41,500 tons, while the mills could produce 47,575 tons. In other words, the Government demand amounted to 87 per cent of the mills' production for six months. This was why the 90 per cent freezing order was issued by the Government. The Labour Member explained the measures the Government had adopted to increase production of paper. Firstly, they appointed Mr. Bhargava as Paper Production Commissioner. Secondly, they cut out non-essential luxury varieties and restricted Government requirements to only a few easily manufactured standard qualities. Thirdly the Government had settled the qualities that would keep each mill's production at the maximum. By these methods the Government anticipated an increase of 12,000 tons in the paper production in India. The Government had also taken steps to economise paper by arbitrarily cutting down quotas for departments and had effected a saving of 11,500 tons. He stated that by these methods the Government hoped to be able to make available to the public about 33 per cent of its normal paper consumption. He did not deny that there was room for further economy and he promised to bring to the notice of the departments concerned the suggestions made during the debate. Mr. Bajoria was not satisfied with the Government's reply. The motion was pressed to a division and passed by 32 votes against 28 votes.

WHIPPING OF STUDENTS IN SIND

12th. FEBRUARY :—"Whipping is one of the forms of punishment approved under Martial Law Regulations and the Government see no reason to interfere with the discretion of Martial Law tribunals in this matter," said Mr. C. M. Trivedi, War Secretary in reply to Mr. Navalrai in the Central Assembly to-day. Statistics were not available, he added, to show what proportion of the youths whipped or caned in Sind were actual students, but the majority were of the student age. There was no case of fainting during the infliction of either whipping or caning.

SALES OF SILVER

The Finance Member reiterated in reply to Mr. Navalrai that no sales of silver had been made to His Majesty's Government since the beginning of the war at rates lower than the American acquisition rate for imported silver and that since the rise in that rate on August 31 last, His Majesty's Government had not approached the Government of India for any further sales to them.

DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES

Arising from Sir Feroz Khan Noon's answers to Mr. Navalrai's question on the working of the Defence of India Rules, Mr. Bajoria asked: Are the Government aware that the Defence of India Rules have superseded the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code?

Pandit L. K. Maitra followed with the query: Are they aware that even for restitution of conjugal rights, the Defence of India Rules have been used? (Loud laughter).

PICE PIECES

The Finance Member, in reply to Mr. Navalrai, corrected a misunderstanding which, he said, had arisen in relation to the press reports of an observation made by him in the course of the debate on small coins. "It is not correct," Sir Jeremy Raisman said, "that Government are withdrawing the old bronze pice pieces and melting them down either for new coinage or for any other purpose. Such bronze coin as is returned and is serviceable is put back at once into circulation and it is contemplated that the two types of pice will remain in circulation together."

The present output of pice coins was ten million pieces a month, said the Finance Member, replying to Mr. Neogy. This, he added, would be augmented when the position in regard to small coin of higher denominations had been restored. In addition, 30 million two-pice pieces were being minted every month. The Reserve Bank suggested that the example set by the Bombay Electric Supply and Tramways Co. and followed by the Calcutta Tramways by issuing coupons as substitute for one pice coins might be copied by other companies and firms.

Q. Is it the policy of the Government to encourage an extension of this practice?

A. Until the position can be restored, such expedients will be unavoidable.

In reply to supplementaries, the Finance Member added that though coupons of this kind were not legal tender, there was no reason why, in the abnormal situation, commonsense local arrangements should not be made.

MINTING OF COINS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

The Finance Member reiterated that, in accordance with the Government's policy of utilising to the full their available resources to further the cause of the Allied Nations, certain foreign orders were in the past undertaken from time to time mainly for Middle East. Some of these orders included coin of smaller denomination. The only order executed for Australia consisting of nine million bronze pennies and six million bronze half pennies was undertaken as long ago as December 1941.

No foreign orders had been accepted since the small coin shortage became manifest in India and the rate of execution of outstanding commitments was slowed down at once to a minimum and now represented less than one per cent of our minting capacity. These transactions were all carried out at a reasonable profit to Government.

Mr. Bajoria asked if the Finance Member would enquire into what happened to the large number of small coins paid into the railway stations and post and telegraph offices.

Sir Jeremy explained that in normal times these places had to be provided every day with a certain amount of small coins and under present conditions, the net result of the transactions was an outgo of small coins and there was therefore only a small quantity of small coin available even at these places.

BROTHELS IN CALCUTTA

In reply to Mr. Neogy, Mr. Trivedi stated that following a strong remonstrance on the part of the military authorities, the allegations made against those authorities in the November issue of the Calcutta Diocesan Record about the provision of brothels for the fighting forces were substantially withdrawn in an article in the December issue.

The Government of India had been informed as follows by the Provincial Government as regards the question whether respectable people of the localities concerned were asked to leave their houses in order to make way for brothels : "With the arrival of large numbers of troops, brothels sprang up in various localities in Calcutta. Numbers of these were at once closed down, but some started in the vicinity of existing brothels were allowed for a time to remain : but there was no question of turning residents out of their houses to make way for such establishments, nor was any action with the object taken ; and on receipt of various complaints, including complaints from the Metropolitan of India, these were also closed down. No brothels for the troops have been provided by the authorities."

"It is no part of the policy of the civil or the military authorities," added Mr. Trivedi, "to provide brothels for troops or to assist in such provision."

GOVT. AND THE PRESS

Sardar Sant Singh asked a number of questions about the "breach" between the Government and the Indian Press over the publication of news concerning Professor Bhansali's fast.

Q. What steps do the Government propose to take to conciliate the Press ?

The Home Member : As what the hon. Member calls the breach has been closed, this part of the question does not arise.

Mr. Navalrai : Is the breach completely closed ?

The Home Member : A breach is either closed or open. I think it is closed. (Laughter).

Q. Is the Press satisfied ?

A. I have no means of knowing that.

AIR RAID CASUALTIES

The Civil Defence Secretary, replying to Mr. Chattopadhyaya, gave details of the time and date and number of air raids in Calcutta, Chittagong and Feni areas from September 16, 1942 to February 10, 1943.

In reply to supplementaries, Mr. Symons said that the total casualties in all raids in India since April 1942 were 348 killed and 459 wounded.

WAR POSITION IN THE EAST

Mr. C. M. Trivedi read out a lengthy answer to a question on the situation on the Eastern and Southern borders of India.

The President pointed out that the object of interpellations was to elicit answers on definite points and it was a well established rule of the House that during question time any lengthy statement on any subject was not the proper way a

replying. What the Chair would suggest was that as regards the war situation the Government might consider whether it was not desirable to issue a proper statement and whether the Member responsible for Defence should not take the House into confidence in some other manner so far as the progress of war was concerned.

Mr. *Trivedi*, in his reply to the question, stated :

"The defence policy on the Eastern border of India, which was necessary during the time when the Burma Army had to be reorganised and re-equipped following its withdrawal, has now given place to one in which the armed forces in India are only waiting for the most suitable moment to take the offensive. During the Summer of last year there was every possibility that the Japanese would follow up our withdrawal by attempting to invade Northern Assam and our forces were disposed to meet not only the threatened land invasion, but also the possibility of a seaborne attack either in Bengal or on the coast of Eastern and Southern India.

"The eastern frontier may be considered in two parts : the Assam-Burma border and the frontiers of Eastern Bengal. In the former, there has been, as yet, no major encounter with the enemy and activity has been confined to patrolling by both sides. The situation is, however, very satisfactory, the morale of the troops is high and we may be confident of the results of any action with the enemy.

"On the Bengal Frontier, we have made an advance down the Arakan Coast which has removed the immediate land threat to the Bengal Frontier and has carried our pressure against the enemy's forward troops into Japanese-occupied territory. There is little which I can add to the reports which have been published in the press, except to say that, owing to maintenance difficulties in a country largely devoid of roads suitable for military transport, operations have necessarily been slow. The morale of the troops in this area also is very high and good relations prevail with the civil population who have given our troops much assistance. The Royal Indian Navy has played its part in the Arakan operations in support of our military forces. In the air, our forces and those of our American allies are being steadily augmented with modern types of aircraft, and bomber formations are regularly attacking military objectives in areas occupied by the enemy, while other aircraft carry out fighter sweeps and escort duties. The results of these air operations have been most satisfactory.

"In Southern India, energetic preparations for defence still continues ; but although the threat of sea-borne invasion has not entirely disappeared, allied naval successes in the South-West Pacific have considerably reduced the possibility of such attacks and our forces are fully sufficient to deal with any attack which could possibly develop.

JAP AIR RAIDS

"There have been no naval or land attacks on the frontier of India. Enemy air forces have, however, attacked certain areas in Eastern India. Chittagong district has been raided ten times and on the whole damage has been slight. There have been five attacks in the Feni area which have caused negligible damage. On three occasions in October 1942, aerodromes used by American forces were bombed. Calcutta has been raided seven times and full reports of these raids have appeared in the press. Apart from this, there have been no other air raids on India during the last six months.

"I am afraid that it is not possible for me to give details of defence arrangements, since these details might assist the enemy in planning further attacks. The Hon'ble Member may, however, rest assured that adequate precautions have been taken and that full use is being made of modern equipment. Our defences are capable of dealing with any scale of attack which the enemy is likely to deliver. It is, of course, impossible to guarantee interception of enemy aircraft but the recent successes of our night fighters over the Calcutta area have provided impressive evidence of what the enemy is up against in any attempt to penetrate far into Indian territory."

ALLEGED POLICE EXCESSES

The House next resumed discussion of Mr. *K. C. Neogy's* resolution moved in the last session urging an enquiry by a committee of members of the House into allegations of "excesses" committed by the police and the military in dealing with the recent disturbances in the country. The debate did not conclude to-day and was adjourned to the next non-official day, February 18.

In the course of the debate on Mr. *Neogy's* resolution, Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta*, in an unreserved denunciation of the movement which followed after August 8

last, declared that it lacked not only an appreciation of the grave international situation, but also lacked all sense of proportion; it was a movement for the enslavement of India by the Japanese. He believed that the people responsible for it has been arrested too late. He, however, could not see how "excesses" could be justified in suppressing disturbances. In the interest of the war effort these excesses could not be allowed to occur. At present in the provinces a policy of frightfulness was followed in order to terrorise the people and it fell on the Government to enquire into cases of intimidation and terrorisation and to punish those responsible for them.

Pandit Nilukanta Das urged that instead of entrusting the enquiry to the members of the House, the investigation should be carried out by a judicial body to be appointed by the Government. He wanted to incorporate this amendment in the resolution.

Sir Mohd. Yamin Khan (Muslim League), supporting the amendment of *Dr. Ziauddin* that the enquiry should also be held into the "excesses" on the other side, said that the policy of the Muslim League had been not to allow or tolerate excesses by any party, either by hooligans or those in charge of law and order.

Sardar Sant Singh asked if any steps had been taken to verify the allegations made in the House during the last session against the Government. The Government's present policy was a negation of the Rule of Law.

Mr. Govind Deshmukh and *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai* further supported the resolution, *Mr. Deshmukh* giving details of incidents in his province, the Central Provinces, including those of *Chimur*. *Mr. Navalrai* said if the Government opposed the demand for an enquiry, it would be construed as an attempt to screen their own men.

The Home Member, *Sir Reginald Maxwell*, replying to the debate, announced that the Government would oppose all attempts to place their employees in the dock. Public servants must be supported, he said, in all their legitimate actions. The House, he was sure, would agree that all outrages must be suppressed by all means available. Law and Order would become impossible if Government servants had to face an enquiry as proposed by the resolution. Without a firm and loyal police and public services the writ of the House and similar institutions could not run.

The Government had not been idle since the resolution was first debated last session. They had sent round to the Provincial Governments copies of the debate for such action as they thought fit to take. He explained that no enquiry was possible into vague and indefinite allegations and most of the allegations made during the debate were vague, indefinite or represented only one side of the story. For instance, *Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's* story of *Nanderbagh* omitted the fact that the police had to deal with a mob of over 1,000 strong, which was pelting stones and brickbats on the former. The police fired 19 rounds. Fourteen people were injured and five killed, but only one amongst those killed and three amongst the injured were under 16 years of age. The House must remember that *Mr. Jamnadas Mehta* was not present on the spot and his statement was based on hearsay evidence.

Mr. Neogy: Was the hon. gentleman present on the spot? *Sir Reginald*: No.

Mr. Neogy: Then his statements are equally based on hearsay statements.

Sir Reginald referred to the Law Member's speech on the resolution during last session and said that the Government entirely stood by the assurances given by *Sir Sultan Ahmed* then. "Government entirely deny that there is any policy of frightfulness as alleged by *Mr. Jamnadas Mehta*", he declared. The Home Member asserted that no excesses were committed and no excessive force was used in putting down the disturbances of last August. If excesses had taken place, they represented only isolated cases and not the general policy of the Government. The Governments concerned, however, had taken action against persons in those cases. For instance, cases against policemen were pending in C. P., U. P. and Delhi. As these excesses were not a part of the general policy of the Government, there was no case made for an All-India enquiry.

The Home Member asked the House to be careful in judging so-called excesses. The House must remember that it was the mob which was violent to begin with and the police had the arduous task of restoring order and protecting Government property. *Sir Reginald* disclosed that till the middle of November last, 49 fatal and 1,363 non-fatal cases amongst the police force were reported from mob violence. Mob violence was responsible for destroying or badly damaging 192 police stations and posts. 494

Government buildings, 318 railway stations and 309 post and telegraph offices. There were 103 cases of serious damage to railway track and 11,285 cases of serious damage or destruction of telegraph and telephone lines and installations. There were three cases in which military property and installations were destroyed or damaged. There were 14 fatal cases and 70 non-fatal cases amongst the military from mob violence. These figures would indicate the seriousness of the rebellion, the government had to face in this country.

As for women and children the Home Member said that it was not denied that in dealing with mob violence of the character referred to above, in some cases innocent persons had suffered. But he assured the House that it was not wilful action against them. The House, he said, must also take into consideration how innocent persons were made to suffer by mob violence and bomb outrages in various parts of India. He was surprised that no demand had been made for an enquiry into the conduct of the perpetrators of such outrages. Looking from this point of view, Sir Ziauddin's amendment was more logical. The Government, however, were opposed to any enquiry and, therefore, would oppose the resolution and the various amendments.

Dr. Bannerji gave full support to the resolution. He had not concluded when the debate adjourned to the next non-official day and the House took up Mr. Jamanadas Mehta's adjournment motion.

INADEQUACY OF DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

Mr. Jamanadas Mehta's adjournment motion, expressing dissatisfaction with the dearness allowance recently given to non-railway Government employees was next debated and rejected by 37 votes to 27. Members of the Muslim League Party voted for the motion. The European Group voted against it, although earlier in the sitting when Government objected to admitting the adjournment motion and the Chair asked supporters of the motion to stand, members of the European Group were among members who stood.

Moving his adjournment motion, Mr. Jamanadas Mehta criticised the Government policy with regard to the question of dearness allowance to all low-paid servants and said that whereas the cost of living had risen by 103 per cent the maximum compensation granted to a low-paid Government servant was only 21 per cent. What should have been done was that the low-paid staff should have been treated as they were in September 1939. He also protested strongly against the "conduct of the Government for not consulting the representatives of the various employees most vitally affected by the rise in the cost of living". In any case, he said, those living on the verge of starvation should be fully compensated.

Replying to the motion, Dr. Ambedkar said that it raised two points, namely, the meagreness and inadequacy of the dearness allowance announced on January 23 and the failure of the Government to consult the representatives of the trade unions. He said he had great sympathy with the motion, but it was evidently based on misunderstanding. There was no finality in the decision of the Government and there was no reason to assume that the amount granted could not be altered subsequently. It was a matter for the Government to decide the form of any further dearness allowance whether it should be in cash or foodstuffs. With regard to the other point, he explained that there was no difficulty in contacting the representatives of labour. The Government could easily do so in the case of railwaymen, whose Federation existed, but similar contact with other departments could not be established for want of single representative bodies. Even then, he pointed out, that the Government made efforts to consult the representatives of the postal employees and the secretariat staff. The policy of the Government was that it always consulted its workers in such matters as far as possible.

RAILWAY BUDGET FOR 1943-44

15th. FEBRUARY:—The Railway Budget for 1943-44 was presented in the Assembly today. Presenting the estimates, Sir Edward Benthall, Transport Member, forecast for 1942-43 a surplus of Rs. 36.28 crores (Rs. 8.20 crores more than last year and Rs. 8.33 crores more than the original estimate) and for 1943-44 a surplus of Rs. 36.04 crores. Increase in earnings, he said, had been almost continuous, though varying in extent practically from beginning of the year, except during periods affected by political disturbances and widespread sabotage, when a decrease occurred only in goods traffic. The broad fact was that in spite of a severe strain, the Railways had succeeded in maintaining the life of the country while meeting the demands of the military and every essential industry. Food had been given high transport priority and would be transported at all events.

In his review of a year of "unparalleled activity and prosperity" for Indian State-owned railways, Sir Edward said: "Prosperity is illusory but although critics will give the Railways little credit for it, I would remind the House that if that been earned not as in other industries by a heavy increase in the price of what we offer, transport, but mainly by making the best of the available equipment.

"For the Army, we are running more than 400 special troop trains every month, and we estimate that in the current year we shall carry 15 millions tons of military traffic, compared with 500,000 tons in peace-time.

"The Railways have provided a large number of vehicles, specialized and otherwise including ambulances, for use in India and on other fronts, and also a very large mileage of sidings and a number locomotives and wagons for Army Depots; while 19,000 men in railway workshops have made a notable contribution on the munitions front.

"We have the assurance of the military authorities that the requirements of the Army have been met satisfactorily".

In 1942-43 total traffic receipts were expected to be Rs 149½ crores (Rs. 144 crores from State-owned lines and Rs 5½ crores from worked lines), i. e. Rs. 14 crores more than last year and Rs. 19 crores more than the original estimate. Total working expenses including Rs. 12.58 crores for depreciation and Rs. 2.67 for payment to worked lines are Rs. 86.52 crores, and exceed last year's expenses by Rs. 7 crores. Of the expected surplus of Rs. 36.28 crores, general revenues will receive the originally budgeted amount of Rs. 20.13 crores, which is Rs. 2.36 crores over and above the current and arrear contributions actually due from railways under the existing convention and the railway depreciation fund will receive Rs. 16.08 crores, the balance of Rs. 7 lakhs going to railway reserve. The depreciation fund will also receive Rs. 6.30 crores by transfer from the the railway reserve and the railways' debt to the depreciation fund will thereby be wiped out. The balance in the fund will be Rs. 82.19 crores. The balance in the railway reserve will be about Rs. 56 lakhs.

Against a works programme of about 26½ crores, including Rs. 4½ crores for the balance of the purchase price of the B and N W and R and K Rys. there is a provision of Rs. 24 crores (Rs. 13 crores from capital and Rs. 11 crores from depreciation fund), more than half of which is for locomotives and wagons.

Sir Edward pointed out that despite a vigorous campaign to induce passengers to travel only when they must, there had been an increase of 3,000 million passenger miles last year as compared with 1938-39, while this year these figures had been exceeded. Reductions in passenger train services amounted to a saving in train miles of approximately 37% of the pre-war figure, and this curtailment had been necessary to provide for military and goods traffic and to conserve coal stocks.

He could offer no hope at all of any improvement in respect of comfort or speed in passenger travel so long as priority demands continued, but if it was any solace to passengers in this country, he would mention that he had been informed recently by a prominent American railway official that in the U. S. passenger trains were on certain lines subject to the same great delays as in present-day India.

No change in fares and freights is contemplated in 1943-44. and the budget estimate assumes traffic receipts of Rs. 15 crores, Rs. 75 lakhs more than the current year. Total working expenses, including depreciation and payment to worked lines, are estimated at Rs. 88.14 crores, Rs 1.62 crores more than the current year. Of the surplus of Rs 36.04 crores, to which strategic lines contribute Rs. 29 lakhs, Rs. 27.10 crores will go to general revenues and Rs. 8.94 crores to railway reserve. At the end of the year there will be a balance of Rs. 84 crores in depreciation fund and Rs. 9½ crores in railway reserve.

He paid a tribute to railway officers and staff, of whom 99.7% are Indians or Anglo-Indians, for their loyalty during the open rebellion of last autumn and for carrying on in dangerous areas. They had deserved well of India during a difficult year. No less than 126,000 men serving therein have voluntarily enrolled the Defence of India Units.

Referring to the grant of relief to railway workers he said: "In addition to dearness allowance, numerous other arrangements have been made to assist them, such as family evacuation concessions, war injury relief, emergency allowances, educational concessions and so on. The scheme of dearness allowance sanctioned in

August 1942 is estimated to cost Rs. 5 crores a year." Grain shops had been opened which were gradually being extended to supply other necessities of life at prices which would help stabilize the cost of living for the workers.

Stating the position of wagons and locomotives he said: "So far, we have placed orders for 9,973 broad gauge wagons of which we have received 265 and expect to receive about 6,207 by the end of 1943-44. Of metre gauge wagons we have ordered 736, all of which we expect to get. Pressure has been maintained on the UK and US Governments for the supply of broad gauge locomotives, and although some outstanding orders on England have been suspended, arrangements have now been made for the supply of 40 heavy goods engines from America. Deliveries of these are expected to begin in June 1943.

"Indian railways are also to receive 12 metre-gauge heavy goods engines from England and 80 from America. It is hoped that 40 heavy goods engines for the broad gauge will be followed by 145 more goods engines, but the date when these may be expected has yet to be settled. It has been requested that arrangements be made for the supply of a further 150 broad-gauge locomotives during 1944.

The house will be interested to know that plans are already actively being prepared to set up a locomotive construction shop in India during the war if physically possible, although this is unlikely owing to the difficulty of securing plant and raw material, and if not, as part of the immediate post-war reconstruction plan.

Referring to the transport of food he stated that, in order to remedy the serious mal-distribution which was the chief cause of the present grave food situation rather than any substantial shortage of food grains, special priority had been given to the movement of foodstuffs and assured the House that so long as the need arose, foodstuffs would be moved in high priority. If confidence were restored and bumper rabi crops were harvested the railways would be further strained to move such crops promptly but it would be done.

By the end of the current year, the railways hoped to pay off completely the debt both to general revenues and to the depreciation fund. In the division of the next year's surplus 2 conflicting interests had to be considered, viz., the provision of adequate funds to cover post-war rehabilitation and to meet interest charges in periods of trade depression on the one hand, and the plight of the general taxpayer on the other. According to Sir Edward, in peace-time the convention had brought the railway finances into a most parlous position from which they had been secured for the present by the abnormal conditions of a world war. The convention had equally failed in war-time since it gave inadequate relief to the general tax-payer and it has been necessary to introduce a moratorium from time to time in order to secure to general revenues an increased share of the surplus. The Government had, therefore, decided to abandon so much of the existing separation convention as provides for contribution and allocation of the surplus to general revenues and to distribute the surplus expected from commercial lines in 1943-44 between general revenues and railways in the proportion of 3 to 1.

Till a new convention was adopted the distribution of each year's surplus would be decided "ad hoc" after duly weighing the respective needs of general revenues and railways. A resolution seeking the approval of the Assembly to this arrangement would be moved later during the session. He considered that these proposals, which were an initial step towards a fresh settlement, were a reasonable mean between the claims of Railways and general finance. In the opinion of the Railway Department, from a financial point of view, it would be thoroughly unsound to allocate such a large percentage of railways surplus to general revenues unless railways were relieved of the burden of a fixed annual contribution, regardless of whether a surplus is actually earned or not, and that the canons of sound railway finance dictated that apart from contribution to the depreciation fund at least 8 crores per annum should be set aside annually to railway reserve.

It was not proposed to ask the House to consider the terms of a new convention until it was possible to foresee, with greater certainty, the future trend of railway earnings. The Government's proposals provide a fixable arrangement which, while relieving the railways of the necessity of making heavy provision out of of surpluses, prosperous times to meet future fixed contribution to general revenues would enable them to make some substantial provision to meet post-war contingencies and at the same time make large contributions when most needed to general revenues for the benefit of the tax-payer.

In conclusion Sir Edward said: "In war-time it is not the profits but the service rendered which must be the measure of success in railway operations. In

thecoming year, I pray, to use Mr. Churchill's words, that railwaymen may escape blood and tears, but come what may, we will dedicate ourselves to another year of sweat and toil to the service of the nation and to the cause of victory."

FOOD GRAINS SITUATION

15th. FEBRUARY :—"The net gap in our total supply of food grains during 1943 after taking into account the increase in our requirement, will not exceed 2,000,000 tons, representing a deficit of not more than 4% in our total annual production of principal food grains," said Mr. N. R. Sarker, Food Member, initiating a 2-day debate on food, fuel, drugs and standard cloth. "In some of the years immediately preceding the war we pulled through equal or bigger shortages without feeling much strain," Mr. Sarker added. "The carry-over from previous years might no doubt have stood us in good stead, but even after allowing for this, the House will agree that the estimated deficit as such is certainly not of an order that will warrant any panic or alarm. The scarcity of which we hear so much at present is confined almost entirely to the urban centres of the country. We must realize that there is no suggestion of a famine in the country but a stringency which it is hoped will be temporary in the urban centres of the non-agricultural production. The effect of the measures taken by Government, he said, had been seen in the past few days. Government agents operating in the Punjab had been able to purchase over 60,000 tons of wheat as against the 8,000 and odd tons which was all that they could purchase during the month previous to the lifting of the control price. These purchases had no doubt been effected at a price considerably above that fixed by the recent control measures. It was encouraging however that the price, despite the heavy purchases of the last few days, was still falling and there was good reason to hope that it would fall still further. Government, he assured the House, did not propose to relax control over the trade in grain. While their policy was to free the primary wholesale markets from price control, they contemplated that the retail prices for grains would continue to be controlled on the basis of the prices prevailing in the primary wholesale markets. Summarizing the present position, Mr Sarker referred to the steps taken to improve the supply position and said that in addition to the grow-more-food and fodder campaigns, the arrangement for imports of wheat from abroad and the scaling down of exports to neighbouring countries, there would soon be a drive to cut down all internal wastage in food consumption. Referring to standard cloth, Mr Sarker said that it would reach the market by April. The debate was adjourned to February. 17.

RELEASE OF MAHATMA GANDHI URGED

Pandit L. K. Maitra next moved an adjournment motion on Mr. Gandhi's fast and appealed to members of the House to set aside all political considerations and unite in demanding the "immediate and unconditional" release of a great Indian who, he said, was revered by all classes of people.

He was supported by Mr. N. M. Joshi, *Sardar Sant Singh*, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, and Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari. *Sir Henry Richardson*, *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan* and *Sir Cowasji Jehangir* put forward other points of view.

Pandit Maitra said he was not concerned with vindicating Mr. Gandhi's political policy. But, he asserted, on an impartial perusal of the correspondence it would appear that Mr. Gandhi could not by any honest man be accused of personal complicity in the violence that swept over the country.

Mr. Joshi said that if Mr. Gandhi was released unconditionally, he would reconsider the situation. He himself had said so in his letter. Mr. Gandhi had said he wanted to help the country out of the present situation. The question had been asked why should not Mr. Gandhi condemn violence from prison? Mr. Joshi said it was against the dignity of a human being to ask him to express opinions while in prison in order to secure release. It was wrong and unworthy of the British people and of the Government of India to impute motives to Mr. Gandhi and say that the fast was blackmail.

Sardar Sant Singh asserted that the position now was the result of frustration caused by the absence of a National Government at the Centre. He urged Mr. Gandhi's release in order to enable him to review the situation in the country and evolve a better order for the world.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee said the object of the motion was not to censure the Government but to save a precious life about which people all over the world were greatly perturbed.

Mr T. T. Krishnamachari protested against the use of the word blackmail and said it would go down in history as having been flung against the greatest among living Indians.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan expressed full sympathy with the sentimental concern which the Hindu members felt over the self-inflicted ordeal which Mr. Gandhi was undergoing and he joined in the hope that he would survive the ordeal. After reiterating the Muslim League declaration that there was no freedom for this country unless every nationality in it was made to feel free, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan said that the correspondence between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi did not disclose any likelihood of any effort being made to secure a Hindu-Muslim settlement. He requested the mover and his supporters to convince him (the speaker) that if Mr. Gandhi was released there was a probability of a Hindu-Muslim settlement. The correspondence revealed that the Viceroy believed that the Congress was an enemy of the country and yet the Muslim League was asked to come to terms with the Congress before the British would transfer power to other Indians. The Muslim League, he said, had not the power and authority, and it could neither support the release nor the detention of Mr. Gandhi. It was the Government's duty to maintain law and order and it was their responsibility to decide for themselves whether this could be done by Mr. Gandhi's detention or his release. If the Muslim League was in power and in a position to control the situation then it would have been for it to decide, but as it was the League did not propose to take responsibility when it had not the means to control the situation that might be created in the country.

Sir Henry Richardson (European Group) said that putting aside political views, his Group fully understood and appreciated the great respect and reverence which Mr. Gandhi commanded and they fully sympathized with the horror which a fatal result to his fast would evoke. On the other hand, they viewed with no less horror the deaths of all those innocent victims who died violently as a result of the declaration of civil disobedience. The fast was no less a threat to authority without which there would come a chaos which his Group dared not contemplate. The fast was coercion and no Government worth the name could submit to it and retain any authority. His Group, therefore, fully approved the attitude which the Government had taken.

Sir Reginald Maxwell referred to Mr. Gandhi's demands, and said that the Government, without granting any of them, informed Mr. Gandhi that they would release him for the purpose and for the duration of the fast in order to make it clear that they disclaimed responsibility for its consequences. On that Mr. Gandhi replied that if he were released he would at once abandon the fast and that he had conceived the fast only as a prisoner. Thus, if he were released the object for which he declared his fast although still unfulfilled would recede into background. As a free man he would neither demand these objects nor fast. Interpreted in this way, his fast would seem to amount to little more than a demand for release. The Home Member went on to quote from Mr. Gandhi's earlier writings, declaring that hungerstrike had positively become a plague and it was well that the Working Committee had condemned the practice in unequivocal terms so far at least as hungerstrike for discharge from imprisonment was concerned. Continuing, Sir Reginald said Mr. Gandhi was the acknowledged leader of an open rebellion in which he denied the authority of the existing Government and sought to overthrow it. Before that, he was entitled to be heard by the Government like any other subject and was heard. But by declaring civil war, i. e. repudiating the method of discussion, he forfeited that right so long as he remained an open rebel. He could not claim to function except through the success of his method. He could not take part in public life under the protection of the law he denied. He could be a citizen yet not a subject. This was the position resulting from the Congress resolution of August 8. In some of the published correspondence, Mr. Gandhi had made much of his intention of seeking an interview with the Viceroy. But the Congress resolution still stood together with Mr. Gandhi's own words 'do or die.' It was not the method of peaceful persuasion to come to the person whom you wished to convince, armed with a resolution declaring mass rebellion. He also quoted from Mr. Gandhi's speech at the A.I.C.C. after the resolution of August 8 was passed, when Mr. Gandhi declared he was not going to strike a bargain and he was not going to be satisfied with anything else than complete freedom.

The Home Member went on to repeat that the Government did and must hold Mr. Gandhi responsible for the recent happenings that had so disturbed the peace of India, caused so much loss of life and property of innocent persons and

brought the country to the brink of a terrible danger. Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues might seek to repudiate their method now that it had proved unsuccessful but none-the-less the responsibility was theirs. Those deeds could not be undone. If Mr. Gandhi wishes to dissociate himself from them, he could have spoken for himself without consulting the Working Committee. Could he then, without cancelling the Congress movement, without even assurances for the future, claim at any moment to step back as though nothing had happened into the public life of the country and be received by the Government and society as a good citizen? When, therefore, the Government found that the fast could only be prevented by unconditional release, they had no choice but to adhere to the policy already declared. The policy was either right or wrong in itself. If the Government conscientiously believed that it was right a fast could make no difference to it. The Government of India could not surrender their judgment under the threat of a fast.

The Home member referred, in conclusion, to the privileges given to Mr. Gandhi during the fast, and said that short of artificial feeding, to which Mr. Gandhi strongly objected, he was denied no medical attention or nursing which might possibly help to save his life. He had stated that this was a fast according to capacity and he did not desire to take his own life. The Government could only hope that at this late hour he might realize the peril and the folly and the unworthiness of attempting to do what might prove beyond his powers.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that the speech of Sir Reginald Maxwell was itself a reason for Mr. Gandhi's release. Sir Reginald wanted Mr. Gandhi to return to citizenship. Mr. Gandhi had given ample proof that he himself was hoping to return to citizenship. The very fact that he had promised to examine the situation *de novo* was proof of that. The Government should not take their stand on technicalities. He assured the Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council that this was a most favourable opportunity to lead to conciliation.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir said nobody wanted Mr. Gandhi imprisoned. The correspondence, however, had taken his breath away. If Mr. Gandhi was a faithful follower of non-violence, he ought to be prepared to condemn violence unequivocally from wherever that violence came. He appealed to Mr. Gandhi to make an unequivocal statement that he condemned violence unconditionally. If he made such a statement he ought to be released.

As he was speaking it was 6 o'clock and the motion was talked out.

RESTRICTION ON DELHI NEWSPAPER

16th. FEBRUARY :—The Assembly today rejected without a division Sardar Sant Singh's adjournment motion to discuss the restrictions placed upon the "*Hindustan Times*" with regard to publication of news of Mr. Gandhi's fast. Sardar Sant Singh said that the order amounted to this—that the Chief Commissioner wanted this newspaper to be not a newspaper for the public but an agent for the publication of news given by Government. He did not think that was the function of newspapers in any civilized country. He asked why this particular newspaper had been singled out for this treatment and how the use of the D.I. Rules for the purpose was justified.

Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member, reminded the House of the history behind the action taken against the newspaper. He referred to the stoppage of its publication following the pre-censorship orders in September and its resumption at the beginning of the year after the withdrawal of restrictions as a sequel to the resolution passed by the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference in Bombay in October enjoining restraint on the publication of news relating to the disturbances. When the restrictions were withdrawn, the Chief Commissioner made it clear that he would have no option but to reimpose them on any newspaper which disregarded the spirit of the Bombay resolution. On the 1st day of its republication, the "*Hindustan Times*" came out with a great deal of objectionable news relating to Prof. Bhansali's fast and other matter showing it had no intention of observing the spirit of the Bombay resolution and consequently the Chief Commissioner found it necessary to reimpose pre-censorship orders on this paper. That was the position when Mr. Gandhi's fast started. When that happened, the Chief Commissioner at a conference of all editors in the province communicated the advice and the wishes of the Government. There was no attempt in the 1st instance to pass any restrictive orders, but the editors were asked to avoid unnecessary display such as would be likely to excite the public or stir up popular resentment or apprehension. At the same time, it was realized that on the 1st. day of the fast papers would give it wide publicity. The "*Hindustan Times*" came out with big banner headlines and made the most of it.

On Feb. 11, it came out with more fullpage headlines and a great deal of other news about Mr. Gandhi and also, in the correspondence between Mr. Gandhi and the Home Department, omitted the most vital sentence in Mr. Gandhi's letter to the Department and created a false impression of what he had said. The Home Member added that he had been informed it was unintentional. But such an error in publishing the correspondence indicated a certain amount of irresponsibility. When it was clear that the "*Hindustan Times*" did not intend to observe the Bombay resolution, it was necessary to pass pre-censorship orders. The action taken was taken only because the paper refused to co-operate with the Government after having been given an opportunity to do so. There was no question of taking matters out of the hands of the editor. He had been given a chance and he had to avail himself of it. He had made it clear yesterday, proceeded the Home Member, that the Government regarded this fast as a form of pressure upon them and they did not regard this method of applying pressure justified, and it was similarly not justifiable if publicity was given to it in a way that tended to increase that pressure. The Government utilized the D.I. Rules to fight this open rebellion. They could not allow a situation again to arise in consequence of pressure of this kind in which fresh life was given to a movement which had caused such a large amount of disorder and disturbance in this country. The general public, he said, were sick of the mass disturbances and he was confident that the Government would have the support of all reasonable sections of the public.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee said that the order was vexatious and irritating. The fast had perturbed the whole of India and people were anxious to know the state of Mr. Gandhi's health. If an enterprising newspaper gave news which was not given by others, should that be regarded as a crime?

Earlier, the House passed *Sir Gurunath Bewoor's Bill* further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act and his Bill further to amend the Government Savings Banks Act and the Post Office Cash Certificates Act.

FOOD GRAINS SITUATION

17th. FEBRUARY :—Discussion on India's food, fuel, drugs and cloth situation was continued in the Assembly today. Mr. Azhar Ali suggested the stopping of exports and the setting up of a committee of officials and non-officials to advise the Government. He also suggested that there should be no more taxation on the necessities of life.

Mr. Hossainbhai Laljee, after referring to acute transport problem which had made the movement of foodstuffs difficult, stated that the Central Government should have more authority than the Provincial Governments, in dealing with the situation.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi criticized the Government's price control policy and said that while prices of wheat and certain other commodities were fixed, the Government agents bought freely at higher prices and thus nullified their own price-control.

Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport Member, made a statement on the fuel situation in the country and gave details of the Government's coal provision scheme recently put into operation. He said that a Controller of Coal Distribution had been appointed with headquarters in Calcutta who looked to the despatch of coal to different parts of India according to a priority list regarding Government, military and public needs. He said a few months ago 13 or 14% of the available wagons at collieries in Bihar and Bengal were allotted for the public, but as a shortage of wagons had occurred, this percentage had now been reduced to 5, but he thought it was sufficient for public needs. He said the provincial coal schemes were put into operation to ensure equitable distribution, make possible a control of coal prices and maintain supply. According to these each provincial controller would directly place orders with the collieries in accordance with fixed quotas. The working of the schemes, *Sir Edward* considered, was dependent on adequate supply of wagons, which was one of Government's major pre-occupations, and he hoped there would be a general improvement shortly.

After giving details of the coal and soft coke situation in Delhi and Calcutta, the War Transport Member made a reference to charcoal and firewood supplies and said that the best thing would be that they should be locally organized by the provincial or local Governments, but railways would assist in the matter of transport, where it was urgently required. *Sir Edward* also said that the movement of people's food was a matter of the highest importance for the Government and he would gladly receive complaints or suggestions for improvements in this matter.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, criticizing the fuel supply scheme, said that distribution ought to have been decided not on the basis of population, but on the consideration of what particular kind of fuel each area or town used. Referring to the food situation, he said that the control of prices without first controlling the stocks was like putting the cart before the horse.

Mr. K. C. Neogy wanted the Government to explain how the extraordinary shortage of wagons had come about and also why each province had not been able to obtain even its quota from the collieries. He said some of the provinces had defied the instructions of the Controller of Coal Supply in the matter of distribution and fixation of prices.

Mr. J. D. Tyson, Secretary, Education, Health and Lands Department, referring to the production aspect of food and drugs, assured the House that there had been a remarkable increase in the number of essential drugs produced in India since the war, and many of these were obtained by Government Departments entirely from Indian sources. If they were not so obtained it was because the supply from those sources was not at present sufficient, either owing to absence of basic raw materials or of plant or chemicals required for the treatment of raw materials. Speaking on production of food, *Mr. Tyson* said, that as a result of the "grow more food" campaign, for the "kharif" season alone, 8,100,000 acres of land had been brought under food crops, about $\frac{1}{3}$ of this area by transfer from cotton. In "kharif" season 3,000,000 more tons of food had been produced than in the previous year. Provinces had now been asked to undertake all-out production and to ensure that no desirable scheme was omitted merely for lack of funds. The Central Government had offered financial assistance for approved schemes. The post of Director of Agricultural Production had been created, and he would advise the Provinces about their schemes.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt (European group) referred to profiteering in the retail of drugs in the country which he considered was of the grossest order and asked what manner of man was the trader who cornered quinine to make his fortune in a country where malaria killed hundreds of thousands of people yearly. What punishment did he deserve? *Mr. Gwilt* dwelt on examples of drastic punishment given to profiteers in the U.K. and said that if severe action were taken tomorrow against those engaged in anti-social activities and profiteering in essential drugs, the price of a large number of the drugs upon which life depended would substantially fall the day after.

Mr. N. M. Joshi pleaded for the enforcement of proper price-control throughout India, together with a control of supplies, treating the country as a single unit. He held that rationing could solve part of the problem.

Mr. Frank Anthony (Anglo-Indian) in his speech attacked the traders and said that there was a lamentable lack of honest businessmen in the country. He was inclined to think that those handling the trade of foodstuffs, etc., were indulging in hoarding and profiteering. He suggested drastic action against profiteers.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that the Government's primary duty was to look after the equitable distribution of food to all the people of the country. Provincial autonomy should have no consideration in this matter. He wanted the Government to intensify their drive against those who were making fortunes out of the misfortunes of the people. The House at this stage adjourned.

POLICE AND MILITARY EXCESSES

18th. FEBRUARY :—Discussing non-official resolutions today, the Assembly rejected by 40 votes to 17, *Sir Zia-ud-Din Ahmed's* amendment to *Mr. K. C. Neogy's* resolution to the effect that the enquiry proposed by the resolution into the "excesses" alleged against the police and the military should cover investigation of the nature of the organization leading to dislocation of communication, murder, loot and forcible extortion of money and certain allegations against factory owners. The House then rejected without a division *Mr. Neogy's* original resolution also.

The resolution urging the suspension of the Central Legislature was not moved as the mover, *Mr. K. C. Neogy*, was one of the Nationalist Party members absent from the House for the day.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS SOLUTION OF DEADLOCK

Pt. Nilkanta Das, another member of the party, moved his resolution asking for the implementing of the Federal part of the Government of India Act. Discussion on it resolved itself into a debate on Pakistan.

The mover declared that a composite Government at the Centre envisaged in the Federal part of the Act together with Coalition Governments in the provinces,

was the only solution of the present deadlock caused by one of the two principal parties adopting a policy of negation and the other taking its stand on impossible demands.

Sir Sultan Ahmed, Law Member, intervening early to indicate the Government's attitude, said the House would realize that this was primarily a matter for H.M.G. to consider, but the Government of India would welcome discussion on the resolution because the suggestion made in it was one of the solutions of the deadlock. The Government would remain neutral, but he hoped that the debate would be carried on with cordiality and goodwill and contributions would be made which would be useful in solving a most difficult problem.

Sir Yamin Khan declared that Federation had been shelved for ever and could never be revived. The Muslim League would never accept it, and he suggested to the movers and the supporters of the motion that the only way open to them was to come to a settlement with the League.

Sir Frederick James (European Group), speaking entirely for himself and not for the group, asked for clarification of certain points about the demand for Pakistan. After referring to the different definitions of Pakistan and the guarantee of fair treatment for minorities under it, *Sir Frederick* asked: Assuming your goal is achieved, assuming the principle of home-lands for the various communities in the country is carried out as is suggested in the Pakistan resolution, what then? Once you have your sovereign units will there not come upon those units the dire necessity of coming together again into some form of union for common purposes? Would not the compelling forces of history and geography and economic development bring together those sovereign units into some Federal system which would give them protection not only against military aggression but against economic aggression against which not even politically independent and sovereign States could always stand by themselves? Is it not the tendency in all parts of the world for units, though politically sovereign, to come together for common purposes?

Supporting the resolution, *Mr Jamnadas Mehta* said that under the Federal scheme, which the resolution advocated, the House could have a Government of men elected by it instead of this "wretched day-to-day, hand-to-mouth Government." The demand for Federation was put forward only as a temporary solution and with no intention of anticipating the post-war constitutional development of the country. The Hindus would gain no undue advantage under the Federal scheme—the British Parliament had seen to that—for out of a House of 250, Muslims would have 80 seats and Hindus 112.

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, explaining the Muslim League viewpoint, declared that there were other direct, more wholesome and happier ways of achieving the object of a responsible government than the method of enforcing the Federal part of the Government of India Act. The more wholesome and happier way was agreement between the parties in the country. The Muslims of India would never accept any form of Central Government which placed them at the mercy of the majority community. He requested the Governor-General to convey to H.M.G. that if they tried to enforce the Federal scheme in this country under some pressure or other, they would be making the greatest mistake. The only solution was Pakistan.

Replying to *Sir Frederick James*, the speaker declared: "Our differences with our Hindu friends are not greater than the differences between other nations of the world and therefore, there is no reason why these sovereign and independent States of Pakistan and Hindustan should not be friendly to each other and work as good neighbours and good friends and if ultimately they decide to have some sort of co-operative body for certain purposes, who am I or anybody else to stop them from doing so?" As regards defence, he believed that humanity would in future devise some method by which the defence of any country would not assume such importance as it did today. Even if the United Nations should fail in devising such a method, the interests of Pakistan and Hindustan would bring them together to defend their territory because if one was gone the other would not survive.

Pt. Nilkanta Das, replying to the debate, regretted that the Pakistan controversy had been introduced into the debate. He held that the British Government stood pledged to Federation. Moreover, the attitude of those who opposed, meant that they did not feel responsible enough for providing a popular government for the country. The resolution was rejected without a division.

PROHIBITION OF TEXTILE EXPORT

The House rejected by 37 votes to 18, *Maulvi M. A. Ghani's* resolution urging the "prohibition of export of textile goods from India till such time as the needs

of the people of the country were fully met with." The resolution was supported by Sir M. Yamin Khan, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta and Maulana Zafar Ali and was opposed by Mr Gwilt (European Group).

Mr. T. S. Pillai, Joint-Secretary, Commerce Department, replying on behalf of the Government, said that there was no case for total prohibition of exports of cloth, but the Government had been restricting exports. He pointed out that India was fighting a common war and it was incumbent on her to go to the rescue of other nations just as they were helping India in several other matters. The Government did not deny that there was shortage, but it was not grave. The Government were trying to increase the production of standard and other types of cloth to relieve the situation. He also maintained that in the interest of India's textile industry, contact with her foreign markets could not be entirely discontinued.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

19th. FEBRUARY:—During the general debate on the Railway Budget in the Assembly today, Dr. Sir Zia-ud-Din Ahmed suggested that the railways were at present being run neither as a purely business concern nor as a purely public utility concern but as a mixture of both and as one or the other according as Government liked. He favoured their treatment as a public utility concern and not as money-making concerns. He urged the amalgamation of all railways in India into a single unit administered by the railway authority responsible to the Indian Legislature.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer congratulated the War Transport Member on achieving for the Indian railways a position which was a long way off from 1936, when Sir Otto Niemeyer characterized the condition as disquieting. But while congratulating Sir Edward Benthall, he should not like it to be thought that his group were completely satisfied. They hoped Sir Edward would "keep it up" and continue to contribute at least Rs. 8 crores to the reserve and make generous contributions to the general revenues. Reserves built up now would put the railways in a state of readiness to meet replacements in the postwar years, provide a "cushion" against post-war depression and make it possible to lower freights and fares in difficult times.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said that the huge profit was a matter for congratulation, but it came largely from tax on transport, and was therefore a burden on the poor. Of the surplus shown Rs. 10 crores resulted from increases in rates and freights, and this extra revenue was unwarranted and unjustifiable considering the scale of railway finances. In the present food crisis, the railway administration should have transported articles of food free.

He urged the reduction of rates and freights to the level prior to 1936. Reciprocating the compliments paid to railway workers by the War Transport Member, Mr. Mehta pleaded that the Government should keep them contented as regards provision of food and dearness allowances by giving adequate compensation against the rise in the cost of living.

Sir A. H. Ghaznavi, examining Sir Leonard Wilson's speech in the Council of State, said that Sir Leonard had made certain revelations which were not to be found in the Budget speech of the War Transport Member. He said that while charges for the transport of certain commodities belonging to the public had been increased, those levied for military goods had remained unaltered. He interpreted this as a clever attempt to conceal what India was incurring owing to the war. He claimed that this would affect adversely the finances of India at the time of the allocation of expenditure. He also wondered why rolling stock and railway lines to the value of Rs 160 lakhs and Rs. 42 lakhs respectively had been taken out of India and fresh imports were being arranged at a cost several times higher. The cost of militarization of certain railways in E. and S. India, he said, should have been borne by the War Department alone and not shared equally by the railway administration and the War Department as at present.

Mr. Frank Anthony associated himself with the tributes paid to railwaymen and drew the attention of the War Transport Member to certain grievances of the railway staff in the matter of classification, system of ranking, overtime work and promotions. He pleaded that adequate dearness allowance should also be given to those receiving salaries between Rs. 100 and Rs. 500.

Khan Bahadur Shahban asked why Rs. 27 crores from expected surplus were marked for transfer to the general revenue. The amount could have been spent in improving transport facilities.

Sir Mohammed Yamin Khan held that the Government had done well in paying a large sum from the railway surplus to the general revenue in order to relieve the tax-payer to some extent. He claimed that it was unnecessary to go on accumulating the Depreciation Fund every year. *Sir Mohammed* urged the abolition of the policy of 25% recruitment to the superior railway services from England, and wanted complete indianization. In the matter of experts, he said, they could be recruited from abroad, but the Government should not undertake to offer them extra salaries by way of overseas pay, etc. Further, he said, the present prosperity of the railways made it imperative that larger relief allowances should be paid to the staff, especially those whose salaries ranged between Rs. 100 and 250.

The Railway Member, *Sir Edward Benthall*, replying to the debate, repudiated the suggestion that in the railways they extracted the maximum amount of work for the minimum amount of pay. The Government, he said, had already looked into the complaint regarding long hours of work on the railways but their inquiries did not substantiate the allegation. They had, however, issued instructions that hours of work on the railways should be reasonable and additional staff should be employed to cope with additional work. They had also asked the railway administrations to provide temporary quarters for such additional staff. The question of giving extensions to men on the verge of retirement was considered very carefully, each case on its merit. The House, he asked, should not forget that in times like the present they did require experienced hands, particularly to fill the places of those who had joined the defence services. Referring to Indianization, *Sir Edward* said that between 1934 and 1941, the Indian element in the superior services had risen from 43.40% to 61.10%. This would indicate that as men at the top retired, their places were being taken by Indians. He also disclosed that recruitment from the UK had been in abeyance for the last two years. Dealing with rates and fares, *Sir Edward* explained that the total average increase since the war began had been 6½%. the increase compared very favourably, he claimed, with the increases made in other industries during the same period. *Sir Edward Benthall* reminded the House that during this period they had not enhanced the rates for full wagon loads of foodgrains. They were carrying food at pre-war prices and were giving priority to it and moving it as fast as it could be carried. He claimed that the benefit of carrying food free of charge would not go to the consumer. He shared in the hope that the railways had reached the peak of wartime rates and fares but said that the whole question would only be examined after the war. Referring to *Sir A. H. Ghuznavi's* complaint that charges for military traffic had remained unaltered, the Railway Member reminded the House what *Sir Andrew Clow* had declared two years ago, that military traffic would not be subject to enhanced rates. He wondered why *Sir Abdul* had chosen to accuse the Government now. As for the sale of rolling-stock and track to the war Department, the recoveries were made on the basis of prices prevailing immediately before the war, subject to such depreciation as was regarded suitable. *Sir Edward* claimed that charging railways with 50% of the militarization cost in the defence of India zone, was beneficial to the railways. Referring to the question of dearness allowance, *Sir Edward Benthall* said that the policy of the railways was not only to compensate railwaymen but to provide them food at cheaper rates. He said that the dearness allowance scheme had cost the Railway Administration Rs. 5 crores since August last and this year they hoped to spend Rs. 3 crores on the food provision scheme. He said they were doing everything possible to stabilize the cost of living of the workers. The question of raising the limit of application of dearness allowance to those receiving salaries higher than Rs. 120 was a complicated one, in view of the Government of India's recent announcement in this matter, because railways were a Government Department and what they decided was apt to affect other departments also. He, hoped, however, that the cheap food they proposed to provide would relieve some of the hardships of the staff. This concluded the debate and the House adjourned till the 22nd.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

22nd. FEBRUARY :—The Assembly today concluded discussion on the motion moved last week by *Mr. N. R. Sarker*, the then Commerce Member, that the situation in this country as regards food, fuel, drugs and the production and distribution of standard cloth be taken into consideration.

Mr. I. S. Pillay placed before the House the Commerce Department's viewpoint regarding kerosene and standard cloth. India, he said, had never been self-sufficient in the matter of kerosene and imported the bulk of her requirements from Burma. The Government had to introduce the system of rationing by gradual cutting down

of its supplies to the market. Kerosene prices were fixed by periodical agreement with oil interests in a manner which eliminated speculation.

As for standard cloth, Mr. Pillay explained that till recently 70% of the provinces were indifferent to the scheme from its very inception. He denied the allegation that the Central Government were lukewarm because it might have affected their receipts from the taxes on profits. After describing the stages of the negotiations with the textile industry, Mr. Pillay said that notwithstanding the attitude of the Provincial Governments, the Central Government in November 1942 booked orders for the supply of a certain quantity of cloth, and reached a settlement with the millowners last month under which the latter had agreed to place 50% of the manufacturing capacity for the production of standard cloth. Prices for standard cloth would be fixed by the Government and not by the industry. The Government would allocate quotas and supply standard cloth to the provinces participating in the scheme. A Standard Cloth Commissioner with H.Q. in Bombay had already been appointed. It was anticipated that 50,000,000 yds of cloth would be made available during the next 3 months.

Mr. C. P. Lawson felt that agricultural statistics were mere conjectures and required better organization. He emphasized the imperative need of Government cutting out dealers where there was shortage on account of manipulation of dealers. He also stressed the need of publicity to eliminate uneconomic crops and methods of production. Lastly, he urged co-ordination of Central and Provincial activities in connexion with the food drive in all its aspects.

Mr. H. M. Abdulla was opposed to reimposition of control of wheat, which, he said, would again result in hoardings of wheat and black markets.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai complained that the Sind Government had introduced rationing of foodstuffs without ensuring its supplies.

Mr. A. N. Chattopadhyaya felt that the "grow more food" campaign would not succeed because the peasantry had not taken to it. Unless the Legislature gave the peasantry the proprietary right to land, they would not work heart and soul. As for hoarding, the speaker wanted the Government to take over the distribution of foodgrains if they were anxious to put the hoarder out of court.

Moulvi Abdul Ghani claimed that defective control, misuse of powers by provincial officers and discrimination in allocation of transport were the main factors responsible for the present food situation in India. He strongly objected to export of rice to Ceylon which caused great hardship in the rice consuming areas.

Mr. M. A. Kazmi spoke on "the gross mismanagement of the Food Department" and complained of the way in which permits were issued. He maintained that the Food Department was meddling with the economic problems of the country.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee suggested the removal of all impediments to the movement of crops from one part, Province or district of the country to another, the abolition of price-control, the cessation of exports, the bringing in of imports, prevention of hoarding, stoppage of profiteering and the affording of greater facilities for the transport of foodgrains by the railways.

Replying on behalf of the Government, Maj-Gen. E. Wood, gave in detail the Government's scheme to resolve the food problem as it related to the procurement and distribution of food in the different parts of India. He said: "In the matter of procuring normal surpluses, the Government considers that there should be a minimum of impediment and obstacle to the market where he can hope to get a reasonable price. It is at this point where the Central Government propose to acquire the surpluses and intend that there should be both a control over the price and control over both the movement and distribution." Referring to the exports of foodgrains, he said that they were substantially lower than they were in past years, and they were being further cut down, but to those who suggested total cessation of exports, he would say: "If we deny essential help to others what help will we in our turn receive in our difficulties." He repudiated the charge that the military were hoarding and said the stocks held by the Defence authorities could be counted in terms of weeks. The total annual defence requirements today 'plus' the annual exports of today were comparable in terms with the average of exports for the 3 years before the war. Coming to the question of punishment for hoarders he expressed the hope that the new penalty of confiscation in conjunction with the existing penalties and of imprisonment and fine would be used in a salutary and effective manner. As regards the consumer-hoarder, whose panic buying results in the disappearance

of working margins and working balances from the retail shops and whose nervousness gives opportunity to unscrupulous traders, he said that every one of them should be brought to realize that it was he who was grinding the faces of the poor. Maj-Gen. Wood reminded the House of the results achieved by the abolition of price control on wheat, and said that not only the black market prices of wheat broke but the prices of 'bajra' and 'jowar' subsided and conditions in retail markets became easier. He claimed that certain stocks were progressively coming into circulation and that prices of different foodgrains were being brought into line with the normal relationships. Referring to comments made on the apparent lack of co-operation between the Provinces and the Centre, he assured the House that there was a very marked anxiety of allowing Provincial Governments to play their part in solving this all-India problem. He said he was hopeful of bringing the divergencies of method into line and very shortly replace extemporized arrangements with permanent machinery that would fulfil the purposes the Central Government had in view. For this purpose he declared, a conference was being held with the Provinces during the week. Concluding he said: "We require and seek all the help that the public can give. When we have secured that help then this Government's firm determination to see to it that the peoples of India do not starve will not remain an expression of their resolution, but will become an established and assured fact."

VOTING ON RAILWAY BUDGET DEMANDS

23rd. FEBRUARY :—The possibility of railways running air services in India after the war was indicated by Sir *Edward Benthall*, War Transport Member, Government of India, in the course of the debate on problems of post-war reconstruction on a cut motion moved by Sir *Frederick James* on the Railway Budget in the Assembly today. Sir Edward said: "It is true that the railways will experience competition from the air after the war, but I do not rule out the possibility of railways running their own air services."

Sir *Frederick James*, presenting what he termed a 4-point programme of post-war reconstruction for the railways, suggested rationalization of transport, the reconstruction and betterment of railways, a comprehensive housing programme for labour and future control and management of railways. He said it was difficult to anticipate post-war conditions, but there would be an enormous number of transport vehicles and trained drivers and mechanics available after the war. He, therefore, urged that provinces, in co-operation with the Centre, should now be asked to prepare extensive road construction and betterment schemes. Both roads and railways were national assets and they should grow together. The first task, he concluded, was admittedly to win the war, but the responsibility of those now in power was not to neglect the future. "If plans and preparations are not ready, when peace comes, as it will with the collapse and utter defeat of the enemy, the result will be a 'flat spin.' Energies will be wasted, not used and chances of reconstruction lost."

Sir *Edward Benthall*, replying, explained that it was not possible to tackle the whole problem of post-war reconstruction as it related to the railways at this time, without serious impediment to the war effort. The war, he said, must be our first care, and we should not divert our energies. He admitted that the subject was one of vital practical importance to the railways, but made an emphatic assertion that the Government were not entirely asleep in this matter. The problem of reconstruction was a world problem, and the Government of India could not settle it alone. However, they had set up a Reconstruction Committee before which railway planning would also come up for consideration. Referring to rationalization of transport, he said that the Government would consider these and all other problems at the proper time. For the present, he could say that there was a probability of maintaining priority control before the rail-road question became normal. Referring to the question of road development and the employment of demobilized technicians, he said that it was a subject of primary responsibility of the provinces. The Government, he concluded, were anxious to deal with post-war reconstruction problems and he would seek to obtain experts to advise them and to find funds for the purpose, as soon as it was expedient and possible.

The mover thereupon withdrew the cut motion.

WAGON ALLOTMENT

Mr. *K. C. Neogy* earlier moved a cut motion to discuss the wagon allotment and problems of distribution.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, supporting the cut motion, caused amusement when he declared that "the bangle industry in Ferozabad is not a war industry." He added that large numbers of workers depended on this ancient industry for their livelihood and arrangements should, therefore, be made for the provision of wagons to carry raw materials such as coal to Ferozabad in order to keep the industry alive. He also referred to unemployment among textile workers in some parts of Bombay presidency owing to shortage of wagons to carry coal.

Sir Edward Benthall, replying, remarked that in the bangle industry, Mr. Joshi had chosen a classic example of the transport problems which the railways faced. Though the bangle industry did not help the war his department recognized that failure to supply it with raw materials was bound to cause unemployment and distress. In the UK where total industrial effort was directed to winning the war and where the whole system was more highly organized, such industries would be wiped out and workers transferred to war production. That was not possible in India. But though the bangle industry must have a low priority, that did not mean the department had no sympathy with the men engaged in it, and he assured Mr. Joshi that industries like this were constantly before the department. Replying to Mr. Neogy's demand for the establishment of an advisory committee of consumers to help the department in the allocation of wagons, Sir Edward thought that such a committee was unnecessary because the present system was working satisfactorily on the whole and was being constantly revised in the light of experience. When the motion was put to the vote, official benches, apparently absorbed in other matters, failed to say "No," and the Chair announced "Yes have it". The Opposition mildly cheered the unexpected adoption of the motion. Government members were startled but looked on helplessly as the House passed on to the next motion.

RATES AND FARES

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai then moved a cut motion to protest against the enhancement of rates and fares in the last few years. He argued that the increases were decided upon owing to deficits, and later, on account of the war. But now that there was a large surplus it was reasonable to demand a reduction in them, particularly in 3rd and Inter class fares. He questioned why a part of the surplus was being diverted to general revenues.

Sir Hugh Raper, replying on behalf of the Railway Department, asserted that the Government were conscious of overcrowding in the train. The fact was that in spite of "Less Travel" campaigns there were more passengers wanting to travel than the railways could accommodate. Over-crowding would rather increase than diminish by a reduction in rates and fares. Moreover, railways would have to cope with more goods. In the case of 3rd class traffic the fares had increased by only .05 pies per mile from the pre-war level and certain concessions which were introduced in order to compete with road traffic were withdrawn when there was no justification left for keeping them in force. Deterioration in accommodation was inescapable but the Government were doing all to prevent it. He held the view that by keeping the rates and fares up at least to some extent, more travellers and more goods would be avoided.

The motion when pressed to a division was lost by 38 votes to 20.

GRIEVANCES OF RAILWAY SERVICEMEN

Mr. Joshi, by the last cut motion moved during the day, dwelt on the grievances of railwaymen regarding conditions of service. He objected to the scheme of dearness allowance under which railwaymen were classified according to localities and scale of pay. He wanted the abolition of these categories and urged a uniform flat rate of dearness allowance to be paid to workers with pay up to Rs. 250. He further complained that there was no relation between the rate of dearness allowance and cost of living and suggested that the creation of a machinery, such as was suggested by the Rau Committee, by which dearness allowance could be increased automatically with an increase in the cost of living. As for the proposal to pay dearness allowance in kind and not in cash in order to prevent inflation of currency, Mr. Joshi said that inflation was due to a wrong currency policy and not because dearness allowance was paid in cash. Industrial workers were small in number as compared to the total population of India and their payments would not affect the currency position appreciably, he claimed.

The debate was continued on the next day, the 24th. February, when Sir Edward Benthall announced that certain modifications in the scale of dearness allowance were under consideration, but he was not in a position to announce them today. Government's proposals would shortly be discussed with the representatives

of railwaymen and a decision would be announced. His department, he emphasized, was always anxious to meet the legitimate demands of workers and he had taken note of the views expressed in the House. At this assurance, Mr. *Joshi* withdrew his motion.

APPEALS OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Complaints against the manner in which appeals of railway employees in the matter of service, emoluments, etc., were dealt with, were made by Mr. *Frank Anthony* on a cut motion which was supported by Sardar Sant Singh, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai and Mr. *Joshi*. Mr. Anthony expressed disappointment with the existing conditions and urged the establishment of a tribunal consisting of men with judicial experience to deal with appeals from railway employees.

Sir Edward Benthall, characterizing the motion as an attack on the impartiality of the senior railway staff, said that he came into the department as a sort of new broom looking for cobwebs to sweep away, but, as he had already publicly declared, he had found in the senior administrative staff not only justice but also humanity. From his examination of the situation, he was convinced that the existing system was sound and he did not believe that the provision of officers with judicial experience was desirable in the railway administration. The proper way was to make adequate regulations and trust the officers to carry them out. It was, of course the business of the department that officers had right ideas in the matter. He had heard complaints in the House, but, he should like to hear reference made to cases where men had been unjustly dismissed or superseded.

Mr. *Anthony* withdrew his motion.

RECOGNITION OF MUSLIM WORKERS' UNIONS

The House rejected by 42 votes to 12, Mr. *Mad. Nauman's* cut motion urging the recognition of railway Muslim employees' unions and associations. He pointed out that in the peculiar conditions obtaining in India the establishment and development of communal unions were not only desirable but necessary in the interests of labour and the administration. The argument that membership of labour unions should not be based on religion was not sound because in Europe all labour organizations consisted of Christians. He complained that existing non-Muslim unions were influenced by the Congress and manned by Hindus.

Sir Hugh Raper, Transportation Member, Railway Board explaining Government's attitude said that under the rules Government servants' unions should first consist of a distinct class of Government employees and secondly, all Government employees of the same class must be eligible for membership. The question of recognition of associations of Government servants formed on a communal basis came under consideration many times but the 2nd rule referred to above definitely ruled out a communal union. Government felt that there was an excellent case for unions being organized of a particular class of workers such as railwaymen or Posts and Telegraphs' employees and so on.

Mr. *Joshi*, opposing the motion, challenged the statement that the existing trade unions were dominated by the Congress. There were no Hindu or Christian interests to be served in the trade union movement, he said. Muslim workers themselves had not shown a desire to have a separate organization. If members of the Muslim League Party took more interest in the Muslim workers, they would find that the economic interests of Muslim and Hindu workers were identical.

Mr. *Govind Deshmukh*, opposing the motion, referred to the fact that the dearness allowance which the existing trade unions fought for and secured was not meant for one community only but accrued to workmen of all communities.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed referred to the growth of trade unions in other countries such as Holland, and explained that separate unions for Roman Catholics and other denominational groups were features of the intermediate stages of development and these different bodies ultimately merged into one national organization.

Sir Edward Benthall, replying, said that he recognized that the demand made in the cut motion was a natural consequence of the present policy of the League and he realized that they felt very strongly in this matter. The question of communal unions had been considered only in 1941 and Government had decided not to change the policy of non-recognition of communal unions. He declared that he was not convinced by the speeches from the Muslim League benches that the interests of Muslim employees has suffered. Figures of recruitment, for instance, showed that the Muslim percentage in the subordinate service was steadily increasing and nearing the proportion prescribed for them. As regards promotion, Mr. *de Souza*

had investigated complaints of Muslims having been wrongly passed over and had given his findings. He reiterated Government's opposition to communal unions whether they be Hindus, Muslims or Europeans, and at the same time he assured the House, that so long as he was Member-in-charge he would do his utmost to see that the settled policy of Government to secure a fair deal to Muslims was rigidly and faithfully carried out.

In the division, Government, Nationalist, European and some unattached members combined to throw out the motion.

EXTENSION TO RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Seth Yusuf Abdulla Haroon moved a cut motion to discuss the extensions given to the employees in the railway services and said they adversely affected the promotion of junior officers, especially Muslims.

Sir Hugh Raper said that the number of those officers granted extensions was very small and the number of additional officers required was larger and therefore the extensions did not really affect promotions. The House was under the erroneous impression that junior-grade officers had actually suffered or their claims to promotion had been ignored. He further repudiated the charge that any discrimination was made against the Muslims.

The motion was lost without a division.

QUOTA FOR FOR MUSLIM EMPLOYEES

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, by another cut motion, wanted to discuss the need for fixing a quota for Muslims and other minorities in the selection grades in the railway services.

Sir Edward Benthall said that the cut motion raised a major question of policy. The policy of the Government was to avoid communal consideration at promotions from grade to grade, and selection was based on merit combined with seniority and this was strictly adhered to. He said the House would agree that the railways should be run as a commercial concern and the best men should come on top. The motion was rejected without a division.

The guillotine was applied at 5 o'clock and the demands were voted. The House adjourned.

RAILWAY SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS

25th. FEBRUARY :—The House disposed of demands for supplementary grants in respect of railways for 1942-43 including a block of demands totalling some Rs. 10½ crores, out of which Mr. *T. S. Sankara Ayyar*, Financial Commissioner, explained that some Rs. 3 crores would be covered by saving in non-voted portions of the grants. The net amount would, therefore, be about Rs. 7½ crores, attributable mainly to increased dearness allowance, to supply of foodgrains to employees at less than cost price, A. R. P. additional police for patrolling railway tracks and repairs to damage caused by floods, cyclones and sabotage.

INDIAN RAILWAYS ACT

The Assembly passed *Sir Edward Benthall's* Bill to amend the Indian Railways Act as reported on by a select committee. The Bill deals with compensation to passengers involved in accidents, whether or not the accidents were the result of any wrongful act, neglect or default on the part of the railway administration such as would under the present law entitle a passenger to damages. The select committee raised the limit of a railway administration's liability in respect of any one person from Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 10,000 and also omitted the provision which specifically debarred a passenger travelling without having with him a proper pass or ticket from having any right to compensation if involved in an accident.

ALIGARH UNIVERSITY AMEND. BILL

The Assembly passed Mr. *J. D. Tyson's* (Secretary, Education, Health and Lands) Bill to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act and *Sir Sultan Ahmed's* Bill to amend the Civil Procedure Code. Mr. *Tyson's* Bill, inter alia, sought to enable the university to modify its ordinances expeditiously and provide special courses of study for students who wish to join the fighting forces. The House then adjourned till 5 p.m. on February 27, when the annual budget was presented by the Finance Member.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

27th. FEBRUARY—Introducing the India Budget for 1943-44 in the Central Assembly yesterday, *Sir Jeremy Raisman*, Finance Member, disclosed a revenue deficit of Rs. 94.66 crores for the current year and a prospective deficit of Rs. 60.28 crores next year on the basis of existing taxation.

The revised estimate of Defence expenditure in the current year on revenue account is placed at Rs. 189.75 crores and in 1943-44 at Rs. 182.81 crores.

Defence Capital Expenditure in the current year is Rs. 49.14 crores and next year Rs. 16.85 crores. Capital expenditure is on account of aerodromes, industrial expansion, reciprocal aid, new construction for the RIN etc. HM's Government do not intend to pursue the proposal to modify the character of the present Financial Settlement on which the apportionment of India's defence expenditure between British and Indian revenues is based.

New taxation proposals include a central surcharge on taxes on income above Rs. 5,000 a year, increase in supertax on slabs between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 3½ lakhs by a uniform half-anna in the rupee, in corporation tax to 2 annas in the rupee, further increases in postal and telephone rates and an excise duty on tobacco. The EPT is also to continue for another year.

The Finance Member urged the need for economy in personal expenditure. He said that during the war there was an obvious alternative to private spending which most powerfully assisted the war effort—investment in loans of the Government of India on the largest possible scale.

Announcing the proposals of the Government for dealing with the revenue deficit of Rs. 60.29 crores which, on the estimates presented is anticipated in the forthcoming financial year, the Finance Member said : We have, in this context, to bear in mind that the current year will, it is estimated, close with a revenue deficit of Rs. 94.66 crores. By far the larger part of these sums has, of course, to be met by borrowing, but it is proposed to raise Rs. 20 crores, or approximately ¼ of the prospective deficit, by new taxation.

Last year we introduced into our system of direct taxation certain features which combined the methods of borrowing and taxation. Whilst such experience as we have had justifies the retention of these features, it is not proposed to endeavour to extend their scope further this year. The reasons are not far to seek. The incomes which come within the orbit of our income-tax system are those of a comparatively small fraction of the population, a section in which, moreover, the habit of investment in public loans is generally speaking already well established.

It is impossible to deal adequately with the problem of surplus purchasing power by methods which do not touch agricultural income at all and which are inapplicable to that vast body of industrial employees whose incomes fall below any taxable minimum which it is practicable to adopt. It is, therefore, clear that the National Savings Movement must cast its net far more widely and must secure the co-operation of large elements in the country who are not affected by direct taxation. Whilst action on these lines thus calls for unremitting attention and a constantly renewed endeavour, it will not affect our immediate proposals.

To deal first with income-tax, there will be no change in regard to incomes up to Rs. 5,000. On the next slab of incomes from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 the Central surcharge will be increased from 9 pies to 10 pies in the rupee, and on the slab from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000, it will be raised from 14 to 16 pies in the rupee : on the balance above Rs. 15,000, the surcharge will be increased from 15 to 20 pies in the rupee.

The effect of these changes will be to impose a surcharge amounting uniformly to 66% over the basic rates of income-tax. At the same time, there will be an increase in the super-tax on the slabs of income between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 3½ lakhs : here the surcharge will be raised uniformly by half-an-anna in the rupee.

The resultant aggregate rates of super-tax, including surcharge, will thus run from 2 annas in the rupee on the lowest slab to 10½ annas on the top slab.

Corporation tax will also be raised by half-an-anna, to a rate of 2 annas in the rupee.

The Excess Profits Tax will be extended to cover the profits of a further period of one year, but the rate of 66½% will remain unchanged. The additional revenue from these changes in direct taxation is estimated at Rs. 7 crores in the coming year.

TAX ON TOBACCO

Turning now to indirect taxes, I would observe in the first place that it is proposed to continue for a further period of one year the levy of the emergency

surcharge of 1/5 over the schedule of Customs import duties which was imposed in the last Finance Act. We are still fully conscious of the disadvantages which would attach to a measure of this kind in normal times, but our import trade must remain subject for the time being to highly abnormal restrictions and emergency control, and in these circumstances, we cannot afford to forego such gain as accrues to our revenues from the additional duties. For the rest, we propose to introduce 2 new taxes, an excise duty on tobacco and an excise duty on a vegetable product.

The quantity of tobacco consumed in India is extremely large but, while imports have long been subject to Customs duties at luxury rates, the problem of the internal taxation has hitherto defied solution, thus, leaving notable gap in India's fiscal system.

Tobacco's unique eligibility for taxation is universally acknowledged: it is not a necessity of life, its use is widespread and its consumption can be varied greatly, according to the means of the consumer. By various methods, ranging from a State monopoly to the licensing of vend, it is taxed in almost every other civilized country in the world, and experience in these countries shows its immense revenue possibilities.

The feasibility of systematic taxation on all-India basis was repeatedly examined by the Government of India, and in 1925 the Indian Taxation Inquiry Committee observed that "the considerations which led in other countries to the selection of tobacco as 2 of the principal subjects for consumption taxation apply with equal force to India."

The problem was last investigated in 1930-31 but no solution was found and Provinces were accordingly encouraged to derive what revenue they could from the control or taxation of retail vend and generally to develop this field of taxation in the hope that experience of the various schemes suggested might lead to the evolution of a practicable general excise system. Apart from the obvious administrative difficulties the two chief obstacles at that time were that the tax on tobacco was not then a Central prerogative and that even if the Provinces introduced identical legislation, there then existed no organization capable of operating the excise on an all-India basis. These obstacles no longer exist, as under the present Constitution Act the power to levy a tobacco excise has been clearly allocated to the Centre, and with the development of Central excises which has taken place in recent years we have organized the administrative machinery on lines which now enable us to tackle the operation of a new all-India excise. In view, therefore, of the compelling need for additional revenue we have decided to introduce a Bill for the levy of excise duties on tobacco produced or manufactured in India, with the exception of the tobacco grown for the personal consumption of the grower or the members of his household.

Administrative difficulties undoubtedly remain, but we have for some time now been engaged on a detailed survey of the field, and we are convinced that with care and close attention they can be satisfactorily overcome. The system will be more fully described when consideration of the Bill is moved: all I need say now is that it embraces all forms of tobacco, that the duty will become chargeable only after the tobacco has been cured and will in some cases be charged on the manufactured product, that the rules allow payment to be postponed till the tobacco is about to pass into manufacture or consumption, that the scale of duties has been so devised as to cause only a modest increase in retail prices: that full drawback will be granted on exports and that the cost of administration will form but a small percentage of the yield. On the limited data now available the yield of the tax cannot be precisely calculated but we estimate a gross return of Rs. 10 crores during the first year.

I may observe here that, in the course of our inquiries we have been impressed by the considerable scope which exists for the development of this important cash crop, both in extending the cultivation of and the internal and external trade in high quality leaf, and in generally improving production and marketing; and we propose to make an annual grant of Rs. 10 lakhs for the purpose of financing measures designed to bring about such improvement.

The proposed excise on a vegetable product, sometimes known as 'Vanaspati,' raises no administrative difficulties. There has for a long time been public agitation against the frequent use of this product for adulterating natural ghee, but that is an aspect which is not directly relevant to our present purpose, which is to raise new revenue. The rate proposed for the new tax is Rs 7 per cwt, and the estimated yield is Rs. 140 lakhs.

We propose finally to make certain increases in our postal and telephone rates, which are estimated to yield approximately Rs. 120 lakhs. The changes are an increase in the inland letter rate for each tola after the 1st from half-an-anna to 1 anna: an increase in the inland parcel rate for the 1st 40 tolas from 4 annas to 6 annas and an increase in the existing surcharge on telephone rentals from 1/6th to 1/3rd.

The total estimated yield from new taxation thus amounts to Rs. 201 crores leaving a revenue deficit of Rs. 40.19 crores to be covered by our borrowing programme. When it is remembered that this is the estimated position for a period which will carry us to the end of 44 years of war, it can, I submit, only be viewed with extreme satisfaction.

The Hon. Members will find, in the explanatory memorandum, a statement summarizing the position in regard to our public debt as it stood before the war and will stand on the basis of our present estimates at the end of Mar. 1944. These figures are explained in the memorandum which shows that, as compared with the last pre-war figure of Rs. 1185 crores, the total interest-bearing obligations of the Government of India will have increased by Rs. 86 crores by the end of the current year and by Rs. 146 crores by the end of next year. Practically the whole of this is in the form of internal rupee debt and the increase covers the estimated revenue deficit and capital expenditure on defence.

It will be seen that excluding the capital of Railways and of Posts and Telegraphs certain loans and advances, investments and cash, the so-called deadweight debt at the end of 1943-44, is estimated at no more than Rs. 317 crores. Even against this we shall hold, in addition to a vast amount of Central property, a quantity of partially remunerative assets. As against the modest net annual liabilities which the service of this debt will impose, we have in recent years called into being important new sources of revenue, which cannot fall, even after purely war-time features have been discarded, to contribute powerfully to the strength of the budgetary position.

In the consciousness of this intrinsic strength, India can face the future with confidence and can play her part among the United Nations. Immediately ahead lies the stage of final effort which alone can lead to the consummation of victory, a stage which can be shortened not by eager hopes but by unrelenting endeavour. Beyond this lies the stage of international co-operation in the great tasks of reconstruction and in laying the foundations of a peace that can be maintained, and here too India will have a part no less significant than in the winning of victory.

BUDGET SPEECH

The following is a summary of the Finance Member's Budget speech:—

Against an expected deficit of Rs. 17.27 lakhs the actual deficit turned out to be only Rs. 12.69 lakhs chiefly due to improved revenue.

REVISED ESTIMATES, 1942-43—REVENUE

Revenue is estimated to show an improvement of Rs. 26.76 lakhs, while expenditure is expected to increase by Rs. 86.35 lakhs chiefly on account of Defence expenditure. Deficit in the current year is expected to increase from Rs. 35.07 lakhs to Rs. 94.66 lakhs. Mainly due to the war in the Pacific a shrinkage of Rs. 4.35 lakhs in customs revenue is expected which is more than offset by Rs. 14 crores improvement under Taxes on Income and Rs. 1½ crores under Salt. Provincial share of divisible pool of incometax will be approximately Rs. 10.55 crores excluding arrears.

Surplus profits of the Reserve Bank paid over to Government have amounted to Rs. 3.24 lakhs as compared with Rs. 2.62 lakhs originally estimated. Posts and Telegraphs Department is expected to add Rs. 1.35 lakhs more in current year, while Railway contribution to General Revenues remains unaltered at Rs. 20.13 lakhs.

EXPENDITURE—DEFENCE SERVICES

Details of revised estimate of Defence expenditure for 1942-43 amounting to Rs. 189.75 lakhs are as follows:—

REVENUE PORTION		Lakhs of Rs.
(1) Basic normal budget	...	36.77
(2) Effect of rise in prices on (1)	...	8.61
(3) India's war measures	...	135.96
(4) Non-effective charges	...	8.41
		<hr/>
		189.75

Capital portion		Lakhs of Rs.
(1)	Air Forces, Aerodromes	18.37
(2)	Capital outlay on industrial expansion	... 12.00
(3)	Reciprocal aid—Aerodromes	12.75
(4)	New construction for the RIN	... 4.72
(5)	Capital outlay on Telecommunications Scheme	... 1.30
		<u>49.14</u>

It became clear in the current year that substantial increases in the 3 arms of the Defence Services beyond those envisaged in the last Budget Speech were called for to protect India against fresh dangers to which the course of war had exposed her. By the middle of the year recruits at the rate of about 70,000 per month were enlisted. For equipping additional troops India is obtaining her full share of the greatly increased production of the United Nations. Land Forces in India during 1943-44 are expected to reach a stage of reasonable adequacy to meet all likely demands for the defence of India.

Existing financial settlement which has worked very well in an atmosphere of mutual cordiality and trust was concluded at a time when no major expansions in land, sea and air forces or our supply activities were in sight. Measures of expansion were then inaugurated and it soon became obvious that all expansions in the land forces in India must be considered as one joint war measure and that the cost thereof should be divided as follows :—

- (a) India should pay for the raising, training and equipping "from Indian resources" of all land forces raised in India for their maintenance as long as they stayed in the country and were available for the local defence of India. When they left for overseas the cost of India of raising and training them and also of equipping them would be recovered from HMs. Government who would assume all further liability for them.
- (b) All imported equipment and stores for such expansion measures of the land forces from whatever source (with a few exceptions) would be provided free by HMs Government.

The allocation of the cost of expansion of the RIN raised no special problem. As regards the Air Forces in India the cost of major expansion, like that of the land forces, was a joint war measure. The incidence of expenditure on 2 kinds of activities called for special attention in this connexion, viz., expansion of the Supply Department's activities and reciprocal Lease-Lend aid to American Forces in India. Capital expenditure was being incurred by HMs Government under the former, while a good deal of the industrial development taking place under the expansion schemes would be to the permanent advantage of India. It was to the mutual interest of both parties that the allocation of capital expenditure on supply measures should be reviewed.

The Finance Member proceeded to England to discuss these and other major aspects of the Financial Settlement. While HMs Government pressed for a revision the Government of India's contention was that the present Settlement should not be abandoned. Sir Jeremy Raisman announced that "the Government of India have been informed that HMs Government do not intend to pursue the proposal to modify the character of the present Financial Settlement. The Settlement therefore stands."

As regards allocation of cost of Air Force expansion India's liability will relate only to the amount of expenditure actually brought to account by India, viz., the capital outlay incurred in India on the provision of airfields and other ground and operational facilities and the recurring costs of the squadrons and connected services while employed in India. As regards Supply measures it is proposed that India should provide $\frac{1}{2}$ of the capital required and own all the assets already created or to be created.

In the matter of Reciprocal Lease-Lend aid to America the possibility of entering into a direct Mutual Aid Agreement with the USA is at present being considered. In the meantime Reciprocal Lease-Lend has been shown in the Defence Estimates as a charge to Indian revenues. At the same time credit has been taken in the same estimates for all receipts from the sale of Lease-Lend supplies to the public Provincial Governments, Railways and Government Departments run on commercial or quasi-commercial lines. Accurate assessment of the cost of Reci-

procal Aid to the US Forces in India is not possible ; the total expenditure under this head has been shown as Rs. 16.70 crores in 1942-43 and Rs. 8.04 crores in 1943-44.

CIVIL EXPENDITURE

Neglecting certain accounting adjustments on account of premia on War Risks Insurance Funds, civil expenditure in the current year has increased by Rs. 14½ crores. This is attributable in the main to causes connected with the war. An important aspect of this is the grant of increased dearness allowances to Central Government employees ; this is estimated to amount to Rs. 170 lakhs in a full year (excluding Posts and Telegraphs, Railways and Defence Services). Measures connected with helping evacuees are expected to cost Rs. 100 lakhs. The abnormal conditions created in the civil life of the country since August last have rendered it necessary to help the Provinces to strengthen their police forces at an estimated cost of Rs. 100 lakhs. The Supply Department has continued to expand. The value of contracts placed by its Purchase Branch from the outbreak of the war up to Dec. 31, 1942 amounted to Rs. 464.5 crores.

FINANCIAL YEAR 1943-44 : REVENUE

Total revenue estimates for 1943-44 amount to Rs. 199.30 crores as compared with Rs. 178.76 crores in the revised estimates for the current year—Customs are expected to yield Rs 30 crores as against Rs. 31 crores in the current year. An increase of Rs. 84 lakhs is expected under Central Excise Duties chiefly on account of sugar. The yield under Corporation Tax and other taxes on income, including EPT is expected to better by Rs. 17 crores, taking into account the trend of recent collections. EPT alone is expected to yield Rs. 40 crores. Rs. 27.10 crores are allowed as contribution from the Railway to the General revenues. Provincial share of divisible pool of income-tax is estimated to touch the record figure of Rs. 12.10 crores.

REDUCTION IN DEFENCE EXPENDITURE

The budget estimates of Defence Expenditure for 1943-44 amount to Rs. 182.81 crores under revenue and Rs. 16.45 crores under capital, details being as under :—

REVENUE PORTION

	Crores of Rs.
(1) Basic normal budget	36.77
(2) Effect of rise in prices	10.62
(3) India's war measures	127.01
(4) Non-effective charges	8.41
	<hr/> 182.81

CAPITAL PORTION

(1) Air Norce—Aerodrome	2.52
(2) Capital outlay on industrial expansion	4.00
(3) Reciprocal Aid—aerodromes	2.85
(4) New construction for R.I.N.	3.28
(5) Capital outlay of Telecommunications sche	4.20
	<hr/> 16.85

For the first time since the war began, the estimates envisage a decrease in the Defence budget, as compared with the revised, so far as expenditure charged to revenue is concerned. Referring to this phenomenon, the Finance Member stated : "Although it would be unsafe to conclude from this that India has now reached the peak of her own war expenditure, it is legitimate to hope that the stage of heavy additions is past."

REDUCTION IN CIVIL EXPENDITURE

Civil expenditure estimates also show a reduction of Rs. 7 crores as compared with the revised estimates for the current year. Of this about Rs. 4½ crores are accounted for by smaller receipts from the Factories War Risks Insurance Scheme which figure as expenditure on transfer to the relevant fund. A reduction of Rs. 2½ crores is anticipated in Civil Defence expenditure. There is a slight increase under interest which is explained by increased interest charges payable on loans raised in 1942-43 and proposed to be raised in 1943-44.

FINANCIAL MEASURES FOR TACKLING FOOD PROBLEM

It is conjectured that the scale of purchases of foodgrains by the Food Department in 1943-44 will be Rs. 75 crores. This will be financed by the Central Government in the first instance and later recovered from Provincial Governments on whose behalf purchases are made.

The Government of India are determined to spare no effort to increase the production of essential food commodities and are anxious that at this stage no scheme which affords promise of making an early and substantial contribution to this end should be excluded from consideration on purely financial grounds," stated the Finance Member. "Pending a decision on the specific measures to be taken, we have provided in the budget a round sum of Rs. 50 lakhs, but we would limit our expenditure to that figure if further outlay were to offer a greatly enhanced prospect of achieving our object."

THE FINANCIAL POSITION

* The Financial position for the coming year can be summarized as follows :—

	In crores of Rs.			
Civil estimates	76.78
Defence services	182.81
Total expenditure estimate				259.59
Total revenue at the existing level of sanction				199.30
Prospecting deficit				60.29

WAYS AND MEANS

Dealing with the ways and means position, the Finance Member stated that total borrowings in the 7 months July 1942—January 1943, averaged Rs. 19 crores a month. Subscriptions to the Defence Loans from February 1, 1942 to January 31, 1943 amounted to Rs. 34½ crores, raising the total proceeds to Rs. 145 crores since the Defence Loans were first issued in June 1940. In addition, there was a steady investment of new money in the rupee counterparts of the repatriated Sterling loans. Total investments of Defence Loans counterparts and certain provincial loans (raised to repay a part of the debt due to the Centre) aggregated to Rs. 93 crores over the 12 months and to Rs. 267½ crores since the beginning of the war. "Apart from the greatly increased war expenditure in India", said the Finance Member, "the general economic situation resulting from the war conditions makes it imperative for every citizen to defer private expenditure to the utmost of his capacity in the common interest and to transfer the investible surplus to Government in the form of loans".

STERLING DEBT REPATRIATION

The necessary sterling required to repatriate the 2½% and 3% undated sterling loans was provided with ease by the Reserve Bank. No counterparts were created this time and the entire rupee finance was raised in the first instance by means of 'ad hoc' treasury bills issued in favour of the Reserve Bank. Subsequently stray lots of the vested stocks as well as the market purchases of the 3½% stock were financed from the balances. For the last and final stage of redeeming £58½ million of the 3½% stock the rupee finance was again in the form of 'ad hoc' treasury bills. "That some £300 million of sterling debt should have been repatriated since the outbreak of the war with so little disturbance to the "money market," observed the Finance Member, "is a consummation for which the country may well feel gratified." The balance of sterling stock, not yet redeemed as falling beyond the scope of the vesting orders, amounted to £13 million.

After referring to the funding of the Railway Annuities by the payment of a lump sum of £30 million to H.M.'s Government, the vesting of Railway Debenture Stocks of the face value of £29 million and the giving of one year's notice for the redemption of three other such stocks, the Finance Member observed: "And thus India has completed the transition from a debtor to a creditor country and extinguished within the brief space of about three years accumulations over decades of its public indebtedness to the United Kingdom."

Of the Rs. 400 crores raised so far for financing the various repatriation and funding operations only Rs. 160 crores may be regarded as being still in the form of Central Bank finance,

UTILIZATION OF STERLING BALANCES

The future utilization of sterling balances has engaged the continuous attention of the Government of India. With the virtual cessation of payments on interest account to external bond holders, which has resulted from the operation of the sterling debt repatriation schemes, the only substantial liability still remaining on account of which sterling remittances would normally be necessary will be payments on account of sterling pensions, family pensions and provident funds. It is estimated that these charges in the period that lies ahead will be from £5 to £6 million a year. The Government of India have accordingly under consideration a scheme for making advance provision for the requisite sterling remittance wherewith to meet future payments in respect of these liabilities on the lines of the arrangements recently made for Sterling Railway Annuities. It is not contemplated that the rights of any class of Government servants would be affected or that the liability to pensioners should be transferred from the Government of India. The Government of India are also considering a proposal that something in the nature of a Reconstruction Fund should be constituted to provide for the financing of a programme of post-war reconstruction including the rehabilitation and re-equipment of industry. In the post-war period India will have heavy demands for imported machinery and plant to equip her greatly expanded industrial system and it will be necessary to proceed on some orderly programme to purchases from overseas. The existence of a Reconstruction Fund with a concerted programme of requirements would enable India to go ahead with post-war reconstruction with minimum delay.

The Finance Member dealt in detail with the problem of inflation and referred to certain postulates which should be borne in mind in considering this problem. These are :

(1) India's war effort has not yet reached the ceiling of the maximum utilization of available man-power and resources ; and public expenditure still continues to promote this end.

(2) In a common war effort the usual methods of settling international indebtedness in goods and services are not available. It is not also possible to employ the usual checks to adjust international trade relations.

(3) Since disbursements should be made in Indian currency, the question of how war expenditure is allotted is irrelevant so far as the inflation aspect of the problem is concerned.

(4) Both the UK and the Government of India will be in a position to pursue sound financial policies and therefore there is not the remotest risk of inflation of the nature and on the scale which occurred in some of the countries which suffered utter defeat in the last war.

On the value of sterling balances he said : "Apart from their being available as a reserve wherewith to pay for the capital goods which the UK will be in a position to supply for India's industrial expansion and the replacement of machinery after the strain which will have been put on it during the period of the war, India's balances should enable her to trade as one of the principal commercial countries of the world and play a helpful part in building up a system of international trade such as would ensure a fair market for goods of export."

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS CLEARED

The Finance Member then cleared certain prevalent misconceptions on the subject of inflation, namely,

1. Failure to distinguish between pure credit inflation and the temporary situation in which an increase in the volume of purchasing power impinges for a time on a stationary or diminishing volume of consumable goods. "Here in India," he said, "the Government has at no time resorted to credit inflation. The easy expedient of borrowing from the Reserve Bank has not been adopted for making up the revenue deficits of government budgets or for augmenting governmental balances for the purpose of meeting disbursements."

2. The misconception that a general rise in prices must mean inflation and that it is caused by avoidable expansion of currency. "This notion," according to the Finance Member, "is the result of confusing cause and effect and misinterpreting the elementary fact that all the expansion and intensification of Government's war activities involves cash payments to an ever-widening circle of recipients in return for labour and raw material or services."

The Finance Member explained that "not all the Government disbursement on war purposes necessarily or proportionately contribute to a rise in prices." He further stated

that "in assessing the significance of a rise in prices it is also necessary to remind ourselves that we did not start from an optimum price level and that the prices of many essential articles, particularly agricultural commodities, had been by general consent unduly depressed for years prior to the outbreak of hostilities and the problem had been not how to keep them from rising but how to stimulate them." Continuing he said that there was urgent need for economy in personal expenditure to check the upward trend of prices to conserve the supply of scarce materials for war purposes and to save and spend in the post-war period when increased spending would be a valuable safeguard against falling prices. During war itself, there was an alternative to private spending, viz., investment in Government loans, which would greatly reduce the risks attaching to the increase in the volume of purchasing power. A free flow of savings into Government loans will not only greatly ease the strain on Government finances, but it reduces competition for the greatly shrunken volume of consumers' goods which is all that is now available. "Our sheet-anchor in the present emergency, the Finance Member emphasized, must be more and more borrowing."

CHANGES IN RAILWAY CONVENTION

2nd. MARCH:—The Assembly to-day agreed to *Sir Edward Benthall's* resolution recommending certain interim changes (as war-time arrangement), in the Convention of 1924, separating Railway Finance from General Finance.

The changes proposed are:—(1) for the year 1942-43 a sum of Rs. 2,35,00,000 shall be paid to General Revenues over and above the current and arrear contribution due under the Convention. (2) from April, 1943, so much of the Convention as provides for the contribution and allocation of surpluses to General Revenues shall cease to be in force; (3) for the year 1943-44 the surplus on commercial lines shall be utilized to repay any outstanding loan from the Depreciation Fund and hereafter be divided 25% to the Railway Reserve and 75% to General Revenues, the loss if any on strategic lines being recovered from General Revenues, and (4) for subsequent years, and until a new Convention is adopted by the Assembly, the allocation of the surplus on commercial lines between the Railway Reserve and General Revenues shall be decided each year on consideration of the needs of the Railways and General Revenues, the loss if any, on strategic lines being recovered from General Revenues.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed and *Mr. Govind Deshmukh* moved amendments urging the appointment of a committee of the House to examine the whole question, *Mr. Deshmukh* suggesting that the committee should be directed to report on or before Aug. 31. The amendments were supported by *Mr. Md. Nauman*, *Mr. Lalchand Navarat*, *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari*, *Pandit Maitra*, *Mr. Jammadas Mehta*, *Mr. Kunzru* and *Mr. A. N. Chattopadhyaya*, all of whom commented on the unfairness, of asking the House to agree, without proper examination of the subject previously, to the changes proposed in the Convention. *Sir Henry Richardson*, Leader of the European Group said that his group were not against a committee of the House but against having it at this juncture. He asked for an expert examination of the whole subject first.

Sir Edward Benthall, replying, declared that after a careful examination of the subject by technical experts, it was the conclusion arrived at by the Department that neither the rates of contribution to the Depreciation Fund nor the balance in it were excessive. He said that he proposed to circulate to members a paper dealing with the subject. He suggested that the resolution should be passed in order to enable the Railway and the General Budget to be got through. He thought the difference disclosed in the course of the debate was not one of what should be done but whether it should be done by an ad hoc committee of the House of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways. Provided the resolution carried the support of the movers of the amendments, *Sir Edward* said he would agree to a committee of the House on the lines proposed in the amendments being set up to discuss the question. He would give early consideration to the procedure of setting up that committee and to the scope of its functions.

The amendments were withdrawn and the original resolution was adopted.

PENAL COD AMEND. BILL

The House passed *Sir Jeremy Raisman's* Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Currency Ordinance so as to prohibit photo-prints or other re-productions of currency notes and bank notes even though these be done for innocent purposes by advertisers and the like.

COFFEE MARKET AMEND. BILL

Mr. T. S. Pillai's Bill to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act so as to give effect to certain recommendations of the 3rd. Coffee Control Conference was passed.

INDIAN ARMY AMEND. BILL

Mr. C. M. Trivedi, Secretary of the War Department moved a Bill to amend the Indian Army Act to provide for the establishment of military prisons. Discussion had not concluded when the House rose till the next day.

RECIPROCITY BILL

3rd. MARCH :—The Assembly today passed Mr. Govind Deshmukh's Reciprocity Bill providing that persons domiciled in any British possession shall be entitled only to such rights and privileges as regards entry, travel, residence, acquisition, holding and disposal of property, educational facilities, franchise, the holding of public office, or the carrying on of any occupation, business, trade or profession in British India as are accorded by the law or administration of such possession to persons of Indian origin.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

5th. MARCH :—Strong support for the Budget proposals was expressed by Sir Henry Richardson, leader of the European group, opening the general debate on the Budget today. "We of this group", he said, "support the proposals and if we have any general criticism of them at all, it is that the country might reasonably have been called on to make even greater sacrifices. Come what may we are determined to do everything in our power to bring about victory at the earliest possible date and whatever sacrifice that determination may involve, we are prepared to make it." He said that whilst it might be claimed that this budget did meet India's war requirements, it could not be said to be in any sense comparable to war-time budgets which had to be shouldered by the people of other belligerent countries. It might be urged that this was as much as India could afford but he should hesitate to agree with such an opinion. He did not deny that conditions differed in this country from those which obtained in other countries and this might be advanced as an argument against a more ruthless type of war budget. In this connexion Sir Henry directed the attention of the House to the enormous profits to some which war production had brought. If this point was examined he ventured to assert that there was ample justification for a larger measure of sacrifice by all those to whom the war had brought almost unparalleled benefits. Referring to indirect taxation, the speaker considered the Finance Member's choice of tobacco and vegetable product as satisfactory. On the subject of dearness allowance Sir Henry said : "As a business man, I know what the cost of these dearness allowances must mean especially when we add the cost of providing foodstuffs to labour below the purchase price. Also owing to inefficient provincial control such supplies have more often than not, to be purchased in a more or less black market. The amounts involved are growing greater and greater and the total of all this expenditure amongst commerce and industry in the country as a whole must by now be enormous. The Finance Member knows very well, that this expenditure is a revenue charge in company balance sheets and consequently in the cases of all those companies which are liable to pay EPT, the actual result is that Government itself is paying the greater portion of these dearness allowances and cost of foodstuffs and the revenue of the country is suffering to the same extent. From all points of view, therefore, we hope that this problem of food supply is being tackled with all the firmness and energy which the situation calls for."

Referring to the problem of agricultural indebtedness, the speaker asked what was being done for the permanent benefit of the Indian cultivators who formed by far the largest portion of the population of this sub-continent and on whose efforts at this time the success or failure of the grow more food campaign so much depended. It seemed to his group that within all the various measures for the control, supply and distribution of foodstuffs, there lay the opportunity not only to diminish this burden of agricultural indebtedness, but to do much else besides. His party believed that the Government had now the chance to sow the seeds of future benefit by framing a comprehensive policy of co-ordination in matters such as crop planning, crop prices, co-operative societies and the many other inter-connected agricultural problems. On the subject of the financial settlement between Britain and India, the speaker said that "the Finance Member's

visit to England last summer has been amply justified and none of the gloomy forebodings of which we heard at that time have come to pass. Rather, should we express to him our grateful thanks for the exceedingly able manner in which he must have handled India's case in his negotiations to have succeeded in obtaining from HMG a continuance of the very favourable terms on which military expenditure is apportioned between the 2 countries."

Dr. P. N. Bannerjee, Leader of the Nationalist Party, criticized the new taxes on tobacco and vegetable ghee. It must be remembered, he said, that the poor artisan, cultivator and industrial workers looked on smoking as something to soothe and stimulate him after his hard work. "For people engaged in intellectual work," said Dr. Bannerji, "smoking is a poison, (laughter and cries of no, no). Poison of the worse sort: but for these hard-working people it is something like medicine, and I therefore object to this item of taxation." He also objected to the tax on vegetable ghee because it taxed the poorer sections of the people. Criticising the new phrase "joint war measures", Dr. Banerji said the House did not know how much expenditure was covered by the phrase and was placed on India's shoulders. India was the base for the United Nations' war effort in the East and the Financial Settlement should not therefore be interpreted as though whatever was spent in India must be borne by India. As regards the Reconstruction Fund, he asked what would be the types of equipment to be rehabilitated and what type of equipment would be purchased, whether it would be purchased in the cheapest market or would India be compelled to buy it in England, where the money lay.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed urged the advisability of entries into a direct mutual-aid agreement with USA in order to get the requirement of India's industry from that country. He said the time had come to link up the currencies of the United Nations in order to ensure stability, and asked the Government of India to give a lead by taking up these matters with other members of the United Nations. As regards the disposal of India's accumulated balances, he said, the proposal for a reserve for annuities, pensions and liabilities etc. was exceedingly unpopular. He inferred that the present Government were thinking of quitting India leaving the country to an administration on which they would not place any reliance regarding these matters. He asked why present day India should suffer for future liabilities or future generations. The best method of dealing with these balances was to treat them as a "floating reserve."

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta declared that the Budget taxed every article that the poor man needed—salt, matches, sugar, the postcard and now tobacco and vegetable ghee. The industrial worker whom the Finance Member praised but left to starve had been given a 10% dearness allowance against an actual dearness which was reflected in the 150% rise in prices. As regards the sterling balances, Mr. Mehta asked: "Have you heard of another instance in which you get the goods and you keep with you the money which you are supposed to pay for those goods?" Mr. Mehta uttered a strong note of warning against hasty or ill-considered reconstruction plans and against dissipation of sterling balances. He referred in particular to what happened after the last war when the Government of Bombay for instance indulged in development programmes for which the people were still paying Rs. 37 lakhs as interest charges.

Mr. Mohd Nauman, referring to the Financial Settlement between England and India, said that in any country but India a settlement of such vast dimension could not have been negotiated and arrived at behind the back of the Legislature. Hardly less "sordid," in his opinion, was the story of the sterling balances. While the Dominion Governments has refused to trade except for payment in gold, the Government of India had accepted without a prickle of conscience payments in sterling. He suspected that India was being placed in a position in which she could buy from England only and lose her sterling balance and become England's dumping ground. In this respect the Government ought to have acted with more responsibility. Mr. Nauman endorsed the new taxation proposals and said the choice was quite satisfactory.

Haji Ismail doubted if the people could bear any further taxation while Khan Bahadur Shahban drew the attention of the Government to the dangers of inflation. He advocated the revaluation of the Reserve Bank gold in India.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai condemned the new taxation and said that if Rs. 40 crores could be borrowed, why not Rs. 20 crores more?

Mr. Krishnamachari urged that direct negotiations with America for a Lease-Lend arrangement should be taken in hand immediately. The Government seemed to be passively if not actively engaged in credit inflation policy.

Mr. *Hossainbhai Laljee* could not see any justification for the presumption that there would be less defence expenditure this year. He characterized the new taxes as a heavy burden on the already heavily taxed people of India, and he could see no justification at all for taxing tobacco "which provided solace to many a poorman.

Sir *Jeremy Raisman*, replying on the debate, dealt first with the question put to him as to whether the Government of India, in agreeing to the financial settlement with HMG, had kept in mind India's financial capacity. His answer was emphatically in the affirmative. By no other criterion could this settlement be justified. There was no argument which would allot to India so small a share of the cost of defending the country against genuine and imminent danger. There was no logical criterion that would lead to that result except the estimated inability of India to make a larger contribution. The Government of India had been fully and constantly conscious of that factor in dealing with the matter and he could conscientiously say that no point that could possibly have been made or gained on behalf of India had been overlooked. He asked the House to take it from him that if there was any disadvantage arising from India's political status in relation to HMG, it had led to the paradoxical position that India had done better than she would otherwise have done. In the desire to avoid exploiting the political position, India had actually derived an advantage.

In reply to Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta's* interruption expressing doubt about this, the Finance Member said that he could only give the House his sincere opinion and judgment on the matter. It was open to any member to question that. These matters had been dealt with not merely by himself but by the whole Government of India—a Government which contained a number of Indians who were just as anxious to see justice done to India as anybody outside.

Mr. *K. C. Neogy*:—"Were they unanimous?"

The Finance Member replied that the questioner was too experienced to expect an answer to that question.

Mr. *Neogy* suggested that if it was in order to refer to particular members of the Government of India, it might also be in order to make clear whether they were unanimous.

Sir *Jeremy* proceeded to reiterate that the Government of India were fully satisfied in regard to the arrangements which he had placed before the House. Referring to the criticisms of the taxation proposals, he said that he was surprised to find how many members there still were who thought that revenue could be raised, or financial deficits dealt with by measures which would affect nobody, neither the poor nor the middle class, nor trade or industry—measures, which would not only avoid hitting the necessities of life but also conventional necessities or even luxuries (laughter). He claimed that consistently with the responsibilities which lay on him, he had pursued a policy which was as favourable to the poor man as could possibly be expected in these abnormal times. Dealing with sterling balance, Sir *Jeremy* pointed out that the treatment of these balances, except to the extent to which they could be dealt with by repatriation, was essentially a post-war problem, and it was not possible for him to foresee the exact circumstances in which we would have to deal with this matter after the war. He would, however, remind the House that the sterling balances arose not only from goods exported out of the country or services rendered in the theatres of war, but that, in so far as under the financial settlement with HMG, the whole cost of the defence of India was not borne by India, the remainder of the cost of defending India and the measures taken in India became part of sterling balances.

Mr. *Md. Nauman*: "What about other Dominions?"

The Finance Member explained that all expenditure incurred by the Dominions in their own territory was borne by the Dominions and also the cost of troops sent overseas. In the case of Canada, the arrangements were now practically Lease-Lend in character. So that, if the hon. member was trying to get examples from the Dominions in support of the case that the financial settlement was not in India's favour, he would get a dusty answer. Regarding criticism of the Pensions Scheme he pointed out that it was purely a financial proposal, and it meant that sterling which could not be utilized now was invested so that it would yield a return when it could be utilized. The scheme did not arise from any fear of repudiation, or from any desire at this moment to provide any additional safeguard for any class of officials. Actually the proceeds of the settlement would again be at the disposal of the Government of India and no other authority. The position in that respect would remain unchanged; the liability would remain with the

Government of India; and the amounts would come into the hands of the Government of India. Speaking of the Reconstruction Fund, he said that it was premature to disparage a scheme of that kind which was capable of being of the utmost value to India. The statement that the scheme was not for the reconstruction of India but for the reconstruction of British industry was a sample of suspicion and prejudice imported into the discussion of these matters. He could not foresee the exact international and currency arrangements as they would be after the war; but to the extent that goods required for India's reconstruction and re-equipment were available in Britain, he saw no reason why the fact that they would be obtained from Britain should be regarded as a disadvantage. It was obvious that there would be a situation of great difficulty for some time after the war; goods would be scarce and it would be difficult to obtain them.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir interrupting pointed out that criticism was that India would be limited to buying only from England. What was the Finance Member's reply to that?

Sir Jeremy said he could not give a categorical answer because for a time after the war there would obviously be conditions of control and restrictions such as there were during the war.

Sir Cowasji:—"If the conditions are favourable, is there anything contemplated in the Fund whereby India will be prevented from buying say from America?"

Sir Jeremy:—"Certainly not, as far as I am aware. I cannot foresee the precise conditions in which these funds will be employed, but I can state categorically that it is not intended as far as we are concerned to limit the object of the Fund in any way. The fact however remains that they do consist of sterling balances and at present the sterling area is one and the dollar area is another and the relation between the two is a matter which will be settled as a postwar problem. Concluding, the Finance Member expressed his belief that it would be entirely to India's advantage to look at the problem from the point of view of international co-operation. We had to remember that India was only a part of the world—a world which was getting more and more intimately linked, each part finding it more and more impossible to pursue an insulated policy. If there was one thing which the war was teaching them, it was the impossibility of any country living alone in its own world. India would be dependent on the resources of great countries after the war in order to build up her productive resources. She would not be able to improve her standard without the closest co-operation and assistance from more powerful and better developed countries, and therefore, these problems must be looked at entirely from the point of view of co-operation in international matters. The Assembly at this stage adjourned till the 8th March.

VOTING ON BUDGET DEMAND

8th. MARCH.—Discussing cut motions on the Budget, the Assembly today rejected without a division *Sardar Sant Singh's* motion to discuss "the repressive policy of the Government." Denouncing the Government for the measures adopted for putting down the so-called rebellion in the country, the mover said that the liberty of the people was being suppressed ruthlessly. *Mr Lalchand Navalrai* asked how long the "tug of war" would go on between those bent upon creating internal trouble and the Government determined to suppress their activities. *Dr. P. N. Banerjee* referred to the treatment meted out to 2 members of the Central Assembly, namely, *Mr. Kailash Behari* and *Mr. Johri*. The former, who had ceased to belong to the Congress Party, had been detained in order "to prevent him from relating the happenings in Bihar in the September session of the Assembly" and the latter "was let off from detention in such a condition that 4 days later he expired." If such a policy continued, *Dr. Banerjee* pointed out, the Government would have no friend left. *Mr. A. N. Dam* appealed to the Government, by a friendly approach, to usher in a new era of peace and goodwill in the country. *Mr Jamnadas Mehta* emphasized that in wartime certain restrictions on the activities of the public were inevitable and these must be voluntarily and willingly suffered. If that was called repression he did not agree with that description. Anything done to prevent gossip mongering and spreading of false rumours or prevent impairment of public morale could not be called repression nor could he concede that any Indian should be allowed to do anything to make the path of the aggressor easier. Action taken against misguided youths and others engaged in activities of this kind must be considered legitimate. Referring to the political deadlock, the speaker said that it could not be made an excuse for anti-war activities. He deprecated loose talk in the same breath of Nazi and British

methods as if both were comparable. Mr Mehta, however, gave instances in which he alleged the innocent had suffered and in which Sir Sultan Ahmed's (Law Member) promise given to the House in this respect had not been honoured. The Government, he complained, had refused even to make inquiries into allegations of this kind.

Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home member, replying to Dr. Banerjee's references to individual instances, reminded the House that most of the action taken in regard to the disturbances had been taken, and must necessarily have been taken, by provincial Governments on their own authority and the details of such action, apart from policy, were not a matter with which the Home Department of the Government of India could fairly be charged. That was also his answer to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's observation on the Nandurbar case about which, however, information at the Government's disposal considerably differed from that relied on by Mr. Mehta. Continuing, Sir Reginald observed that he had never said that no innocent person ever suffered in the course of action taken by the Government. He admitted, with regret, that innocent persons very often suffered. That was one of the responsibilities which lay on the head of people who promoted these disorders. He had also given to the House instances in which action taken by persons engaged in the disturbances had caused loss of life or injury to innocent people engaged in lawful occupations. While he admitted that innocent persons must occasionally suffer in the course of action taken by Government to put down disturbances, the Government could not be censured for such incidents, unless it was also shown that those things were part of the Government's policy. The mere fact that certain individuals had suffered by the Government's action did not mean, and could not be interpreted to mean that such things were part and parcel of the Government's policy. He declared that no opprobrium attached to the word repression. Whether it was right or wrong would depend entirely on the things repressed.

He referred to Mr. Gandhi's attitude to non-violence and quoted from the latter's own description of a mouse which should be considered to be non-violent if it defended itself with its teeth against a cat. What was happening, Sir Reginald said, was that a small force of half-a-dozen policemen were confronted by a violent mob of hundreds. Which of these, he asked, was comparable to the cat and which to the mouse? If the small force of policemen was the mouse, that was the non-violent party. The Home Member did not disclaim that the Government must and did use repression at certain times to meet situations that occasionally arose. He had never denied that force must be met by force and crimes must be repressed; but the Government could not be condemned for any measures taken to repress crime. He went on to give figures of convictions of Congressmen after trials, numbering nearly 30,000 up to the middle of January compared to about 70,000 in the movement in 1932-34, and claimed that no one could say that action taken had been excessively repressive. Reiterating the Government's policy, the Home Member declared that with its responsibility not only to India but to the Allied cause, the Government could not and would not permit activities designed to interfere with the successful prosecution of the war and resistance to HM's enemies. Nor could political or any other motives be regarded as extenuation of offences deliberately calculated to impair the war resistance of the country or undermine order. The Government's policy had also been to take only such action as was necessary to safeguard vital obligations. The removal of the ban on the Communist Party and on the Khaksars showed that the Government were ready enough to withdraw repressive measures as soon as they thought there was a reasonable prospect of withdrawing them with safety. There had been, he asserted, no repression of any ordinary social or political activities or expression of opinion and the Government sincerely hoped that improvement in the situation would be such that further repressive action might not be necessary again while the war lasted.

The motion, as stated, was rejected without a division.

UTILISATION OF STERLING BALANCES

The House also rejected without a division Mr. K. C. Neogy's cut motion to discuss the utilization of sterling balances. Mr. Neogy, referring to the Finance Member's remarks about the importation of suspicion into the discussion of the subject, pointed out that in the evidence given before the Joint Parliamentary Committee retired British officials had voiced suspicion about the safety of their pensions and provident fund, and had suggested the funding of these liabilities. The Secretary of State himself talked about the funding of these obligations. The speaker suggested that the demand voiced on that occasion was probably repealed on the occasion of the Finance Member's visit to England.

Sir Jeremy Raisman, intervening, declared this was quite inaccurate.

Mr. Neogy said Indian opinion demanded that British and other foreign investments in India must be acquired with the help of the sterling balances. He also wanted to know whether any action was proposed on behalf of the Indian Government as regards the maintenance of the value of sterling, whether any guarantees were to be obtained from HMG in this matter and whether the convertibility of sterling into foreign currencies would also be ensured. Also whether steps had been taken to see that in the event of a depreciation in the value of sterling this country would not stand to lose.

Sir Jeremy Raisman confessed to a certain amount of embarrassment in attempting to discuss matters of this kind on the floor of the House. The financial relations, not merely of ourselves and Britain, but of Britain with other countries were also involved, and he could not repeat too often that this matter could not be viewed or dealt with on the simple lines which some members seemed to take. It would hardly be possible for a matter of this kind to be discussed with complete freedom in any legislature and there were many aspects of such a question with which Governments could only deal in consultation with each other and it was quite impossible that at every stage the relations of countries in matters of this kind should be fully explored and explained in public discussion. It was therefore from no desire to do anything behind the back of this House that he would have to refrain from going into this subject in the detail which some members seemed to expect.

India, *Sir Jeremy* went on, had a stake in victory. All the United Nations stood or fell by victory in this war. It was impossible to conceive what the consequences would be to the major portion of humanity if victory were not achieved.

How did the sterling balances arise? India was providing certain goods and services for the war effort and she had a very favourable balance of trade with Britain and the United Nations. Was it because the United Nations were not providing in return the goods which India needed? No. The point was that at the present time the goods which India needed were goods necessary to ensure her safety. The whole productive capacity of Britain was concentrated in the production of weapons for victory. It was because Britain was producing them not only for herself but also for India and others that she was not left with any margin of productive capacity with which to balance the goods and services she was receiving from India. Did Mr. Jamnadas Mehta in the present circumstances expect that Britain in addition to sending the only goods she produced, should send other goods in order to extinguish the sterling balances?

Replying to Mr. Neogy's remarks about the evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, *Sir Jeremy* said there was all the difference in the world between the proposal regarding pensions then suggested and the proposal now made. There was no question now of safeguarding. It was not as if you were handing over money to anybody else. The result of the investment would come back into your hands and you had the same discretion as ever in the application of these funds. It was still in the stage of a proposal and was still under the consideration of the Government of India and not actually formally put before H.M.G. Dealing with Mr. Neogy's criticism of the Reconstruction Fund, *Sir Jeremy* explained: "If a man owes you a debt he can pay by goods or services. It is a commonplace in the international field that you must ultimately be paid in goods or services. Yet you start off by saying that any scheme which keeps him employed in services to you or making goods for you must be barred." It must be remembered, said *Sir Jeremy*, that after this war the position would be different from what it was a few years ago. It would not be a case of a world producing vast quantities of goods and looking eagerly for customers. The position for a long time would be exactly the reverse. There were the devastated countries of Europe, China and Russia and there was the enormous material damage which Britain had herself suffered. In the circumstances, was it absurd to foresee difficulties in getting goods from any part of the world? Our proposition, therefore, was that we should set to work to examine our own circumstances and see to what extent we could prepare now and put ourselves in a position to take advantage of the circumstances as they would exist after the war. If any one saw a sinister motive in that, he (the Finance Member) could not understand it.

PRESS CENSORSHIP

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, by his cut motion, raised a debate on the attitude of the Government towards the Press in India and the working of Press censorship. After tracing the history of the relationship between the Government and the Press

since Delhi agreement of November, 1940, he said that there was a general unwillingness to work the agreement on the part of the Provincial Governments. He reminded the House that there were no popular Governments in many Provinces and public meetings had been banned almost throughout the country. It was through the medium of the Press alone that the public could bring their grievances to the notice of the authorities. He asserted that through the system of Press Advising, Government were able effectively to prevent publication of a certain category of news through the news agencies. Although the system was purely voluntary, papers which did not accept the advice were penalized. Instructions were often given by the Press Advisers on the telephone. Further restrictions have been placed on the Press in May last. The speaker urged, in conclusion, that the Press control should be centralized and be handled by the Government of India.

The *Home Member* complimented Mr. Krishnamachari on his reasonableness and said that there was nothing he said to which Government objected. "If there is one thing I have worked hard for ever since 1940, it is to improve the relations between the Government and the Press. I believe that I have been successful. I can honestly say that I have given the best consideration to the newspapers' point of view to the Provincial Governments and have often succeeded." He reminded the House that there were strong influences at work to persuade the newspapers to their viewpoint. He also reminded the House that the whole administration of the Press rested with the Provincial Governments. It was, therefore, very difficult to take the whole matter out of the Provincial Governments' hands. Conditions varied from province to province and particularly in the provinces where Ministries were functioning. It was difficult to impose conditions on them. The policy the Government of India had adopted was this. In matters of all-India importance, they endeavoured to place certain objectives before the Provincial Governments and leave it to the provinces to work out and achieve those objectives. The Government had stressed that those objectives were to be reached by voluntary agreement with the Press. Sir Reginald Maxwell said that editorial comments had not been subject to any restrictions. But if any newspapers published anything which was regarded as objectionable from the all-India point of view, action was taken against such a paper. The Home Member promised to inquire whether any restrictions had been placed on publishing by the vernacular Press of items which had appeared in the English Press. He, however, did not think that any instructions were given to newspapers on the telephone. As for the present position, the Home Member said that the Government had approved the Bombay resolution of the Newspaper Editors' Conference of Oct. 2 and had responded to it at once. As a result, almost all the provinces accepted the resolution in the spirit in which it was offered. This did not indicate any breach and so long as co-operation was offered the Government would welcome it and meet it. The motion was rejected without a division.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

Mr. Mehta's cut motion to discuss the question of dearness allowance was rejected by the House without a division. Sir *Jeremy Raisman* declared that the Government were fully and deeply conscious of the difficulties and hardships not only of their servants but of the general public. Speaking of Government servants, he said that in addition to their wages Government provides them with a good deal of shelter and clothing. After rejecting the resolution the House adjourned till the next day.

DEMAND FOR MORE SESSIONS

9th. MARCH—The prospect of 2 more sessions of the Central Legislature instead of the usual autumn session in September, was indicated by Sir *Sultan Ahmed*, Leader of the House, speaking on Mr. *Hussainbhai Laljee's* cut motion to discuss "the necessity of holding more sessions of the Legislature in view of the war and the future position of the country in the great developments that are taking place in the world at large." "I am desirous to state," said Sir *Sultan Ahmed*, speaking immediately after the mover, "that if the debate on this motion reveals a general desire for more frequent sessions, the Governor-General will be prepared to agree to holding a short session during the latter part of July or the beginning of August and another short session in the latter part of October or the beginning of November. An arrangement of this nature would materially reduce the length of time between sessions and is as far as we can reasonably be expected to go." Earlier in his speech, Sir *Sultan Ahmed* expressed happiness that though only a few days ago a motion was tabled that the Central Legislature should be suspended, the utility of the House had now been realized and the

demand was made for holding more sessions. "The Government," said the Leader of the House, "have always taken the view that our legislative chambers are useful bodies and the Government always welcome their views and reactions to Government decisions and actions. The feeling that in time of emergency the Central Legislature should have more frequent opportunities for contact with the executive and for making its views on important questions of policy known and felt is one with which the Government have every sympathy."

Sir Sultan referred to certain difficulties of holding more frequent sessions, namely, the pressure on railways and other forms of transport, shortage of accommodation in Delhi and the interference with the day to day working of the administrative machine. On the last point he said that one member during the present session put 18 questions on 1 day, which engaged a senior officer for 2 full days before the replies were prepared. In spite of these difficulties, however, the Governor-General would be prepared to agree to the holding of more frequent sessions if there was a general desire in favour of it; and if the House would co-operate with the Government in securing maximum results in the shortest possible time.

Sardar Sant Singh (Nationalist Party) Sir Ziauddin (Muslim League), and Mr. P. J. Griffiths (European Group) generally welcomed the proposal. Sir A. H. Ghuznavi supported the cut motion, which was eventually withdrawn.

NATIONAL WAR FRONT

The House rejected without a division Mr. Hossainbhai Laljee's cut motion to discuss means whereby people might have a better opportunity to place their views before the Government regarding war activities and the future position and prosperity of the country. Mr. Laljee, in his speech, complained that the bulk of the people in the country had not been taken into confidence by the Government in the matter of war effort nor was there an opportunity for the people to make their views known to the Government on matters like India's status, the nature of the Government in the Provinces and other vital subjects.

Sir Sultan Ahmed pointed out that as far as the Centre was concerned it was doing all that was possible, particularly by the establishment of the National Defence Council and through the National War Front, to keep the people informed of relevant topics connected with war activities. Provincial War Committees were also at work, but if the mover wanted further efforts made, it was open to him to make representations to the Governor of his own Province of Bombay and suggest to him ways and means, which, Sir Sultan had no doubt, would be considered.

Mr. Griffiths explained the ways in which the Front was working and invited helpful suggestions for improvement. He made an offer to any member of the House to undertake to address 13 war meetings in the course of 2 months. He undertook to meet the expenses and arrange the meetings. Mr. Ghiasuddin declared that the Government had failed to make full use of people who were prepared to help them, while Sardar Sant Singh asserted that the War Front would not be national until a national Government was formed at the Centre. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta claimed that it was the labour organizations, particularly those with which he was concerned, that propagated the idea among the workers that this war was for the security of the country and for international goodwill. Sir Cowasji Jehangir said that the idea of the National War Front originated with Indians who felt the need to make the people realize what were the issues involved in the war and make them realize also that assistance given to the war effort was assistance given to India herself to gain independence. Pandit Nikanta Das urged that representative non-officials should be associated with the National War Front and for this purpose it might be necessary to release men from the jails. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari said the present war effort was only intended to create a party to support the Government. The motion was lost without a division.

On an assurance given by Mr. T. S. Pillai, Joint Secretary, Commerce Department, that the Government would see that in the case of trade with E. Africa, normal trade channels were not unduly disturbed, Mr. Hossainbhai Laljee withdrew his cut motion "to discuss the exports from India and the trade relationship with other countries." Mr. Pillai said that Government policy with regard to exports had been to allow only those commodities which could be spared consistent with the war effort and to maintain contact with various markets outside India as far as possible. The E. African Government was probably attempting

to establish price-control and were thinking of an agency to handle imports. There was no attempt on the part of the E. African Government to monopolize imports from this country.

INDIAN SEAMEN

Mr. *Laljee's* cut-motion "to discuss the position of labour, including Indian seamen who were still under the Commerce Department and whose grievances had not been heeded," was rejected without a division. Mr. *Pillai*, replying on behalf of the Commerce Department, said the conditions of these seamen were not as they had been described. No case of delayed payments of wages had come to his notice, but the Government were prepared to make a full inquiry if any such case was brought to their notice. He also referred to the various comforts provided for Indian seamen at different parts in this country.

URDU LANGUAGE IN BROADCASTING

By 31 to 14 votes, the Assembly rejected the Muslim League Party's cut motion to "discuss the grievances of Muslims with regard to the service, language and programmes of the Broadcasting Department."

The mover, *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan* criticized what he described as AIR's "language policy of encouraging high-flown Sanskrit and Hindi words and of coining ridiculous phrases" instead of using the Urdu language, which, according to him, was the language spoken and understood all over India. He also said that items of Muslim interest did not find their due place in the programmes and there was also favouritism shown in the choice of artistes. He complained about the paucity of Muslims in the Broad-casting service and said that their percentage was only 9.6.

Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Defence Member, said he intervened in the debate because he took a great deal of interest in the possibility of a common language for India. Not one of the members opposite, he said, had objected to the use of simple words from any language and they all realized that Urdu was the language originally intended so that people from all parts of the country and from across its border might converse with each other, and that Urdu or Hindustani if they preferred to call it, contained words from all languages such as English, French, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, and it was a growing language. He had recently visited S. India and there he found that recruits from Madras learnt in 10 days to communicate ordinary ideas in simple Hindustani and were becoming literate in that language in about 10 weeks. He appealed for tolerance and a spirit of compromise and patience with the effort to evolve a "lingua franca" for the country.

Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member explained that it had been recognized that the salaries paid in this department were inadequate: their readjustment had been under active consideration and it was hoped that results would be reached fairly soon. Referring to communal composition of the staff, he pointed out that after careful examination of the nature of the qualifications necessary and other factors, certain posts in the department had been exempted from the Government order regarding the percentage of communal representation, but the bulk of the posts came under the communal order. Among all the non-gazetted posts, Muslims had their 25% representation. The paucity of Muslims in the ranks of assistant engineers and technical assistants was explained by the difficulty in obtaining Muslims with the requisite technical qualifications, but special efforts were being made to find ways in which better facilities might be afforded to Muslims to enter the technical grade. As regards programmes, AIR's policy must be to make programmes acceptable to the general listener and to reduce the number of items of quasi-religious or mainly communal items without reducing purely religious items. The motion was pressed to a division and was lost by 14 votes to 31. The House then adjourned.

MARTIAL LAW IN SIND

10th. MARCH:—The Assembly today rejected by 39 votes to 34 the cut motion moved by Mr. *Yusuf Haroon*, Muslim League member from Sind, to discuss the administration of martial law in Sind. Mr. Haroon condemned the introduction of martial law in parts of Sind where the Hur trouble did not exist and alleged that during the 9 months since the introduction of martial law, Sind had passed through "a reign of terror." He referred to a number of incidents in which he asserted that innocent persons had died or suffered in concentration camps. The Hurs themselves, however, were at large in great numbers, and cultivators in the

area affected had left their villages with the result that land was lying uncultivated. He asked that martial law should be removed from areas where there was no Hur trouble and that an inquiry should be made into the charges made against its administration. The Governor of Sind in December had announced that at least in the West part of Sind martial law would be abrogated, but so far that had not been done.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi, Defence Secretary, denied that there had been "a reign of terror" in the martial law area. If the incidents alleged by the mover had happened, how was it that no member had mentioned them earlier in the House or brought them to Government's notice? This was the first time that they had been mentioned and as far as information available to him went, the allegations were incorrect. The military and the police had worked under conditions of great difficulty; the area was enormous and the country difficult owing to lack of communication while the civil disobedience movement and the floods added to the difficulties. But the situation had now improved considerably and a sense of security and order had largely been restored. The task, however, was not complete; all the Hur leaders had not been disposed of; and it was clear that though the state of affairs had changed for the better, the stage had not been reached when withdrawal of martial law would be justified. No one was more anxious than Government that martial law should not be retained a day longer than was absolutely necessary.

MUSLIMS IN SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

The House rejected without division Mr. G. B. Nairang's cut motion to discuss the grievances of Muslims in regard to their "meagre share in the services of the Supply Department and in the contracts given by the Department." Mr. Nairang referred to correspondence which he had with Sir Homi Mody on the subject and said that Sir Homi gave him a detailed reply but since he resigned the position of Muslims had deteriorated. Mr. Nairang explained that between Aug. 1941 and Oct. 1942 there had been a fall in the percentage of Muslims. For instance, in the grade routine staff, the percentage had fallen from 25 to 20. The argument that Muslims with technical qualifications were not available had no substance because there were hundreds of posts which required no technical qualifications.

Mr. J. A. Mackeown, Joint Secretary, Supply Department, said that he must oppose the motion not because the department contended that the position of Muslim representation was in all respects satisfactory, but because he contended that considering the difficulties they had to face and the effort they were making, they deserved no censure but credit for the degree of success achieved. It was correct that between August, 1941, and October, 1942, there had been a fall in the percentage of Muslims employed compared to the total number of staff, but the actual number of Muslims had in most cases increased. Even as regards percentage, it was in excess in certain cases. For instance, in the grade of officers of the Chief Controller of Purchase and Supply the proportion of Muslims was 40%. Mr. Mackeown referred to the difficulties of getting suitable Muslims and said the department would welcome help from members of the House in the matter. If members of the Muslim League Party would give them the names of suitably qualified Muslim officers, the department would give them the fullest chance.

AGRICULTURE IN INDIA

The House gave over two hours to the European Group's cut motion to discuss means whereby the present prosperous agricultural conditions might be used for the permanent rehabilitation of agriculture. Mr. C. P. Lawson, moving the motion, wished that something more than a fraction of the hundreds of crores which might be spent to defend the country against Nazi domination could be spent on defending it against bad agriculture and against a standard of life among agriculturists which was lower than that of any other section of the people. He suggested, among other things, the fixation of minimum prices for crops and the making of central arrangements for dealing with surpluses or deficits. He also suggested a crop planning development of Hydro-electric schemes for the supply of power for a number of minor industries and for tube-wells and a review of minor crops which could be grown in India and which could be used not only for internal consumption but also for export. Mr. B. L. Gray supported the motion and said that minimum prices could not

be maintained unless some purchasing organization on the lines of farmers' co-operative societies existed. *Sir Frederick James* suggested that one of the most valuable uses to which the sterling balances could be put was for reconstruction of agriculture, by providing pumps for water supply, tractors, thrashing machines and ploughs. *Sir Frederick* emphasized the need for the provision of cheap and effective transport for the agriculturist so that he could market his goods. *Sir Jogendra Singh*, Member for Agriculture, gave the assurance that all the suggestions made in the course of the debate would be examined. *Mr. Lawson* withdrew his motion. The guillotine was then applied and all the demands were passed. The House then adjourned.

DEBATE ON THE FINANCE BILL

11th. MARCH:—The Assembly began the debate on the 1st reading of the Finance Bill to-day. *Sir Cowaji Jehnngir* suggested the establishment of an ad hoc committee consisting of members of both Houses and men representing finance and business and those whose opinions on finance were worth while to advise the Government on questions such as joint war measures arising from the financial settlement of 1939 between HMG and India. He expressed doubts about the necessity of creating the pension fund now and said such a procedure might result in ultimate loss because the Finance Member would pay a much higher rate of interest on the treasury bills which he would have to issue in India than the rate he would get from HMG on the fund. Referring to the reconstruction fund he said unless the intention was to sterilize a portion of the sterling balances he could not understand why large amounts should be earmarked for an object which could not be fulfilled now. He thought it possible for the Government to make a statement that they did not intend that sterling balance should be earmarked for goods purchased only from UK. The question whether it would be possible to get goods from the UK or not was a domestic one, but the fact that India should be free to buy in the cheapest market could not be contested. He also thought that it was possible to come to some arrangement whereby the value of sterling vis-a-vis the rupee would be stabilized.

Sir Frederick James said that little reference had been made during discussion on the Defence Service. They owed a duty to these men, who had joined from all parts of India. He paid a special tribute to the work of the Indian Navy and said he understood that *Adm. Fitzherbert* was shortly leaving India. The Admiral had done a great deal to bring the RIN to its present strength and would leave behind in India a great many who would remember his great work (cheers). About the Indian Air Force, *Sir Frederick* asked whether the latest machines and equipment to which the Finance Member referred had arrived. He dealt with a number of difficulties felt by officers, such as the difference in pay and allowance between emergency commissioned and regular officers, passage facilities, accommodation and differences in allowances made to dependants of European and Indian prisoners of war.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh joined in paying a tribute to the services to this country of *Adm. Fitzherbert*. He stressed the need of having a well-planned post-war reconstruction programme and urged that steps be taken to prevent a slump in trade and agriculture. The purchase of tractors and high-power machinery for use in India would be sheer waste of money unless it was preceded by the introduction of a system of collective farming. With the present small holdings and lack of settled labour, it was no use buying heavy agricultural goods. Propaganda by the National War Front was also criticized by *Mr. Deshmukh* who felt it was not good to be told that if we did not do a certain thing we stood to lose. The line should be that if we did a certain thing we stood to gain. The proposal of a direct reciprocal aid agreement with the US. would not only be of financial advantage but would also help India to improve her political status especially if other similar agreements with other United Nations could follow.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed spoke next for 75 minutes and had not finished when the House rose. He explained why sterling credits arose and accumulated and suggested that they should be kept as a floating account and not be invested in long term contracts for it was uncertain when money would be required. These assets should be spent in purchasing heavy industrial machinery which India would require immediately after the war and the purchases should be made from any country and in the cheapest market. He emphasized the importance of entering into a direct Lease-Lend arrangement with the US and said it should not be limited to our defence requirements but should also cover trade needs and scientific

apparatus. The time had also come for economic link-up among the United Nations. If this was done it would give great currency stability both in war time and after the war. If this was not done now there was a danger of a defence in world economy after the war. The Finance Member should put this proposal on behalf of India to the other members of the United Nations. He deprecated talk of inflation and traced it to enemy-engineered plans to upset trade, dislocate currency and disturb the food markets. If business increased, currency would increase and expand. The tendency of hoarding encouraged by enemies of the country must also be taken into account. The theory of a metalling backing of currency was out of date. Gold and silver were no longer currencies or commodities because no value could be attached to locked up treasures. Currency had to expand with the needs of the country. Sir Ziauddin strongly criticized the reduction in the percentage of Muslims in the Supply Department. He had not finished when the President adjourned the House.

12th. MARCH:—*Sir Zia-ud-din Ahmed* commented on the preference shown to the textile industry by the Supply Department at the expense of other industries particularly leather. After urging strict adherence to the communal riots resolution of 1934 in all Departments of the Government he criticized the food policy and concluded by emphasising that the three essentials to be safeguarded for the welfare of the country were food, currency and transport.

Dr. Sir Ratanji Dalal dwelt on the advantages to India of the Indo-British connexion. He was convinced that India would become a self-governing unit of the British Commonwealth of Nations. India required large naval, land and air forces for her defence, particularly when she became free. The present expansion of the Defence forces was a step in the right direction. Defence expenditure was not in any way greater than India's needs.

"In the battle of bread, bania has beaten the British hollow," said *Mr. Jamnadas Mehta*, attacking the Government of India's food policy. On the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of war, India has reached the peak of her sacrifice and a vast majority of the people were underfed and underclothed. Disputing the statement that the purchasing power of the people had increased, he said that withdrawals to the extent of Rs. 51 crores had taken place in the present war period from the post office savings banks and cash certificates. Food and clothing were the two most vital problems of the country today. The Government had failed to achieve any success in relieving the situation. He criticized the Government's withdrawal of control of wheat prices and remarked that, whereas in England prices of essential commodities had only increased by 21% above the pre-war level in India, the price was between 100% and 200%. *Mr. Mehta* complained that the Commerce Department had not explained what exactly was the position of the U.K.C.C. Reports had reached him regarding the increasing influence of the Corporation in India's export trade. Referring to sugar, he said that the Government, by permitting an increase in price of Rs. 2-5 per maund, had made a free gift of Rs. $3\frac{1}{2}$ crores to the manufacturers at the cost of the consumer. Some of the biggest manufacturers in Bombay and the U.P. had told him that they never wanted the increase. He argued that inflation existed in the country to the extent of Rs. 200 crores of currency, making allowance for increase in population, expansion of trade and industry, and hoarding etc., It was wrong, therefore, to say that there was no inflation at all in India. Dwelling on the political deadlock, *Mr. Jamnadas* declared that the solution of the deadlock which began on August 8 last year was incredibly simple; but fasting was not the method and the conference-holders in Bombay were not the people to bring it about. Who were these busy bodies to presume to stand as hostages for *Mr. Gandhi*? *Mr. Gandhi* himself had declared that he was prepared to reconsider the position. *Mr. Gandhi* should, therefore, be allowed to be among the members of the Working Committee even under detention, and, if they came to the conclusion that the "sabotage resolution" of Congress of August 8, should be withdrawn, the Government should also withdraw the order of detention of all Congressmen. In order that prestige on both sides might be saved, both decisions might be announced simultaneously. As regards the solution of the larger deadlock between Britain and India, he asked that H.M.G. should declare their loyalty to the Atlantic Charter in respect of India. India's freedom would then be assured.

Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai* complained that the House and even the Finance Committee were not informed when a decision was reached in respect of joint war liabilities. He joined in the demand for an ad hoc committee to consider the question at this stage. Coming to taxation, he considered that it was quite unnecessary as the whole deficit could have been met by borrowing. He said that the middle classes and the small industrialists were already overburdened. The tax on *vanaspathi* was also unjust. He criticized the Government on the working of the policy of Indianization in the Army and said that there were not enough Indians in officers' ranks. He also said that the majority of the clerical staff at HQ were Europeans. Mr. *Navalrai* had not finished when the House adjourned till the 15th.

15th. MARCH :—Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai*, concluding his unfinished speech of Friday last, urged the Government to start negotiations with the Congress for the removal of the political deadlock and to release Congress leaders, or at last allow the members of the Congress Working Committee to be with Mr. Gandhi in order to give them the opportunity to revise their attitude and thus throw the burden on them. Outlining the Muslim League attitude towards the Finance Bill, Sir *Mohammed Yamin Khan* said that, in view of the Government's attitude, the Muslim League Party had no choice but to vote against the Finance Bill. If prices had been effectively controlled, the food and cloth situation in the country would not have deteriorated. He thought that the whole deficit could have been met by a stricter control of Government expenditure. Regarding the political problem, he wanted the British Government to trust the country if the Congress could not be trusted. There should be a clear declaration of India's freedom so that she could fight the war as one of the United Nations.

Mr. *K. G. Ambedgaonkar*, Deputy Secretary, Food Department, replying to Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta*, said that, if in the battle for bread the bania had triumphed, it was not only against the Government but against the consuming public. It was not a matter for gloating over but for strong public condemnation. It was not only Government action that could remedy this, but strong public opinion, and he hoped the House would give its co-operation in order to create it. Referring to sugar prices, Mr. *Ambedgaonkar* said that, so far as manufacturers in Bombay were concerned, the statement that the increase of Rs. 2.5 per md. was a gift to them was correct, but on other points Mr. *Mehta's* informant was wrong. It was only after examining the question in great detail that the increase of Rs. 2.5 was decided upon. Many factories would otherwise have closed down. It was true that even the increased price had not solved the problem in Bengal. The price was not fixed in relation to the cost of production in Bengal but on the average cost in the whole of India. On any other basis it was not possible to have a control price. The fact remained that sugar was still the cheapest commodity in the country.

Mr. *E. L. C. Gwilt* (European Group) urged the collaboration of the Central Government with the provinces in an attempt to reach uniformity in the payment of dearness living allowance by the various industries and the immediate introduction of price control measures. He considered there was little reason shown in the adoption of the payment of dearness allowance on a scale dependent upon the incidence of the cost of living if there was no parallel price control of the product of the industry concerned, and, if this procedure was permitted to continue without the fixation of ceiling prices of commodities, it would inevitably lead to economic disaster, for who but the State and the individuals comprising it paid these allowances? Turning to the subject of import licences, he pointed out the delays that occurred in granting them and said a huge waste of time occurred not in the actual examination of the files, but in transit from one Department to another and suggested that, if the Government could employ commercial experts to assist them in production, they could also import similar advice to overhaul their filing system. Mr. *Gwilt* also referred to the constant changes, resulting from the rapid expansion of so many Departments in Delhi, not only in their personnel, but in the location of the Department itself and asked the Government to set up a Central Inquiry Bureau for the convenience of visitors. Mr. *Gwilt* drew the Government's attention to the need to control prices, especially of foods and drugs, imported not only at the peril of the ships that brought them to India and the lives of those who manned these ships, but at great sacrifice of the people from whose countries they were shipped. He asked what the attitude of HMG would be if they were made aware of the fact that the people of Britain were being asked to make sacrifices in order to provide a black market for the middlemen in this country. He asked the Government to put a stop to this profiteering immediately.

Mr C. M. Trivedi, Defence Secretary, endorsed wholeheartedly the appreciative references made in the House to the brilliant achievements of the troops, the Navy and the Air Forces in India and their many deeds of conspicuous gallantry and valour in several theatres of war.

About Sir Frederick James's observations on war correspondents, Mr. Trivedi said that the majority of war correspondents had taken a consistently balanced view of our operations in Burma and so had the Indian Press on the whole, though it was true that in certain sections of the Press particularly overseas the modest announcement made in the communique of December 19 was hailed as the beginning of the reconquest of Burma. On occasions it was advisable for those responsible for publicity to pass over in silence speculations or even exaggerations in the Press in order that the enemy might not obtain information of some value. Subject to this consideration, he assured Sir Frederick that it had been and would continue to be the constant endeavour of the Directorate of Public Relations through contacts with the Press or war correspondents or by other means to ensure that publicity was conducted in a manner which would avoid either excessive optimism or undue pessimism. Mr. Trivedi declared that in no single comparable case was the pay of an officer of the Indian Army while a prisoner of war less than the pay drawn by a British Service officer in captivity: in fact, the pay of an officer of the Indian Army while a prisoner of war was always greater than that of a British Service officer. He added that it had now been decided that the marriage allowance and lodging allowance of officers of the Indian Army would not be cut by 25% while they were prisoners of war. In addition, separation allowance which was not granted previously would be given in full.

Mr. Trivedi said that the completion of the 10-squadron plan for the Indian Air Force announced in the Assembly in Nov. 1941 was now in sight. A certain number of modern aircraft had already reached India and more were due to arrive. The limiting factor now was not the lack of modern types of aircraft but an insufficiency of trained technical Indian personnel for ground duties. It was hoped however to form 7 squadrons by the end of June, 1943, and to complete the full 10-squadron programme by the end of this year. This would give India an air force exactly 10 times its size at the outbreak of the war and for the 1st time in its history India would have a modern air force equipped with modern aircraft and able to take an active part in the defence of her frontiers. In addition to this scheme, it had been decided to undertake 2 further important Indian Air Force expansion measures: (1) The introduction of a scheme for the appointment of a number of Indian Air Force personnel to RAF staffs and units in India to gain experience in established units working under war conditions and (2) Indianization of the balloon squadrons.

Mr. Trivedi announced that arrangements had been made for a squadron of the IAF to be at the Delhi airport on March 21, to give members of the Central Legislature an opportunity of seeing for themselves a modern squadron of the IAF. He hoped members would give Government their advice and assistance in obtaining the airmen-technicians necessary for the expansion of the IAF.

Giving figures of the proportion of British and Indian officers in the army, he said at the outbreak of war it was 5.5 British to 1 Indian officer. On September 3, 1942, it was 4.5 to 1. Permanent commissions, however, were not given at present either to Indian or British officers, and officers for the expanding forces were obtained by the grant of emergency commissions. On September 3, 1940, the proportion of emergency commissioned British officers to Indian officers was 2.75 to 1. On September 3, 1942 the corresponding proportion was 1.5 to 1. While the number of British emergency commissioned officers had increased since September 3, 1940, by about 350%, the number of Indian emergency commissioned officers had increased by over 600%.

A voice: "That is not the way to look at it."

Mr. Trivedi said that there was practically unlimited further scope for the appointment of Indians as emergency commissioned officers. The difficulty was a shortage of suitable candidates coming forward. The suggestion made by Mr. Navalrai that permanent commissions should be given could not possibly be accepted. It would be out of the question both on financial and other grounds to build up the army required for war on the basis of permanent employment. The Indian Air Force was purely an Indian service but because fully trained Indian officers were not available, it had been necessary to employ a small number of RAF officers as a temporary measure. Their percentage was only 2½.

Sir A. H. Ghaznavi, speaking amid many interruptions, particularly from the

Finance Member, dealt with the sterling balances and said that the U.S., Canada and S. Africa had all obtained from Britain payments more by dis-investments of British assets in those countries than by opening sterling credits in London.

Finance Member : What is Canada doing now ?

Sir Abdul Halim said that on the Argentine's insistence, Britain had agreed to give them a gold guarantee clause.

Finance Member :—That was before the war.

Sir Abdul Halim :—Whether before or after the war does not matter. Give us the same guarantee.

He went on to endorse the suggestions made by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to utilize the sterling balances for the liquidation of British investments in India, payment for purchases in durable assets like capital goods and payment in part in gold and dollars. He entered a protest against "the frittering away" of the sterling balances in funding pensions and creating a Reconstruction Fund. Criticizing the income-tax administration, he took strong exception to the insistence on Indian assesses, and not European assesses, submitting on oath a statement of total wealth. The law did not require this, and he indicated that a test case might have to be fought in order to establish the law on the subject. He dwelt on what he described as the British business man's cry for more agriculturization of the country and on Mr. R. R. Haddow's "closed fist" shown at Indian industrialists and declared that India would resist any attempt to deprive her of her right to shape her economic and industrial structure in her best interests.

Speaking on the general situation, Sir Abdul Halim complained that Government by their action in connexion with Mr. Gandhi's fast had not only missed a great opportunity of bringing about an atmosphere in which reconciliation both between the communities and between them and Government would have been possible, but they had in the process lost the services of 3 Members of the Viceroy's Council who had the largest support of the people. Mr. Gandhi's release might well have enlisted the energies of the remaining years of his life to the healing of differences between the communities and between them and Government. Sir Abdul Halim, however, affirmed his faith in the good sense of the British people, if not in the present ruling class, and he hoped that co-operation between Britain and India would soon be established.

16th. MARCH :—Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, replying to charges of Government "extravagance" in the use of paper, pointed out that, while shortage of paper did exist, there was no acute suffering. He gave figures of publications in England and India and said that, while in England in 1940, 11,000 publications were issued the figure for India was 15,000. Sir Frederick James had referred to the waste involved in republication in provincial "Gazettes" of notifications in the "Gazette of India." Dr. Ambedkar said this was necessary because the "Gazette" provided the primary proof in law and the "Gazette," therefore, was the last thing to which economy should be ruthlessly applied. The Government nevertheless had applied as much economy as was possible. Matter which once occupied 1½ pages was now compressed into ¾ a column. Margins had been cut out and the Government had circularised Provincial Governments to ascertain whether republication of certain matter in provincial "Gazettes" was absolutely essential. The Government of India had also abolished about 140 forms and suspended others. "Indian Information" was to be reduced to ¾ its present size and the Controller of Printing and Stationery had been given power to examine the essentiality of any publication. Dr. Ambedkar said he was not ready at this stage without further information to accept the suggestion to form a committee of the kind which was said to be at work in the UK, but the Government of India had obtained financial sanction for the appointment of a commercial Master Printer who would be able to do what the Committee in England was said to have done.

As regards Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's complaint that no Indian labour representative had been invited to the Dominion Labour Conference, Dr. Ambedkar said that his Department was not consulted by the conveners of the Conference and it could not therefore, do anything in the matter.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Natrang (Muslim League) raised the question of representation of Muslims in the Central Government Services and objected to the Government's answers to questions on the subject. He also referred to the difficulties of Oriental language newspapers in the matter of newsprint and asked the Government to increase their quotas.

Mr. Frank Anthony referred to the salaries and allowances of British and

Indian commissioned officers. He alleged that 99·9/10% of the British emergency commissioned officers at present were really Anglo-Indians, but, because of the higher scale of pay given to European commissioned officers, they made the statement that they were Europeans. It was also the case, he declared, that the better educated class of Anglo-Indians refused to deny their Indian parentage and drew the lower scale of pay. He was not asking the Government to lower the salary of British officers but to increase the level of income and allowance of Indian commissioned officers. Mr. Anthony complained that Anglo-Indians were not permitted to offer themselves for service in the IAF., so they went to England and were admitted to the RAF and were doing well. Dyson, who held the record with 6 Italian planes brought down in 15 minutes, was an Anglo-Indian.

Sir Vithal Narayan Chanlavarkar, attempting to clear up misunderstandings about the part played by the cotton textile industry, said that, if there was any industry which had foreseen the wisdom of control of production for war purposes and for civil supply, it was the textile industry. It had done its best to maintain production at its highest level and had done everything above board. One reason for the rise in prices was the failure of export control. Men came from the Middle East and in a short time were able to export large quantities of cloth. *Sir Vithal Narayan* agreed with the criticism that Rs. 40 crores as the yield from EPT was an under-estimate and said that a substantial amount of this would be contributed by the Bombay mills alone, including those controlled by him. He charged Government with laxity in the collection of EPT and said that some of the concerns controlled by him had not yet been assessed for Oct. 1941. He also suggested the issue of taxation reserve certificates through which Government could get advance payments of taxes in cash on payment of a small interest as in England.

Criticizing the payment of cash bonus to employees, he said it was the Bombay Government which was substantially responsible for the introduction of this system in Bombay, and he knew of cases in which even 6 months' wages had been paid as bonus. Government themselves were encouraging this because the Income-tax Department had exempted these amounts from September. Having once introduced the system of cash bonus, it would not be possible to alter it, but he suggested that a ceiling limit should be placed on cash bonus and investment of the balance in other ways should be encouraged. He objected to the fixing of Rs. 5,000 as the limit for the income-tax surcharge and said it should not be less than Rs. 15,000. The lower limit was hard on fixed wage earners, who were mostly middle class people and the backbone of the country. About inflation, he declared that it was time for Government to have an Economic Advisory Council which the Treasury should consult. He also asked that no decision ought to be taken regarding the disposal of sterling balance now. He urged political parties in the country to form at least a united national opposition if a National Government was impossible.

Khan Bahadur G. K. M. Shahban, surveying the different aspects of the Finance Member's Budget speech, expressed satisfaction with the allocation between borrowing and taxation and asked if it was not proper to make borrowing more attractive in view of the fact that public response in the past had not been what it should be. He maintained that national leaders whose co-operation the Government had spurned for various reasons, could raise in the matter of a few months loans far exceeding those which the Government got in the last 3½ years war.

He described the funding of reconstruction plans with the country's sterling assets in England, as an unfair financial deal, and said it had evoked the deepest suspicion in the country. He asked the Government to respect national opinion. The speaker also referred to the growing resentment in India's commercial circles against the activities of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation. The establishment of a National Government at the Centre immediately to end the present impasse and to stir up India's war effort was demanded by *Sardar Sant Singh*, who narrated "the repeated failures of the British Government to meet the political aspiration of India. He suggested that the Viceroy should invite the different parties and interests in the country and ask them to select a leader, who should be entrusted with the task of forming a National Government. If the Congress and Muslim League stood out, let them do so, but power should be transferred to other elements in the country. He urged the Government not to intensify feelings of frustration in the country any more but to try to end the political deadlock with the least possible

delay. Criticizing the recent Government booklet regarding Congress responsibility for the disturbances, he asked what was wrong in the motives of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress if they desired the freedom of the country and wanted to prevent Indian soil from becoming a war theatre. He gave the analogy of England and asked if similar motives did not prevail among the entire people there. He objected to the presence of a large number of foreign troops in India and asked why the manpower of India was not fully tapped. He demanded more representation of Sikhs in the higher Government services, and supported the demand for the increase of newsprint quota for vernacular newspapers.

Mr. *M. Nauman* commented on the paucity of Muslims in the Services and the small share they had in promotions and extensions of service. He said that the Government which had called Congressmen rebels were treating them differently from Hurs who were also called rebels. What was the explanation for this discriminatory treatment? Was it because one was Hindu and the other Muslim? He asked Government to do something for the vernacular Press in the country in the matter of newsprint. The Assembly at this stage adjourned.

17th. MARCH :—By 48 votes to 21, the Assembly this afternoon passed the 1st. reading of the Finance Bill. The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was passed. When the House resumed discussion of the Bill today, *Dr. P. N. Banerjee*, Leader, Nationalist Party, said that the Bill was the 7th. or 8th. measure of taxation of the country in recent years. He complained that the Finance Member's reply on the question of sterling balances was unsatisfactory and asked that a committee of the House be appointed to place itself in touch with the currents of thought abroad and safeguard the interests of this country.

Mr. *Hoseinbhoy Latjee*, Leader, Independent Party, after observing that India's contribution to the war effort had been great and that many Indians had gone abroad to defend the Empire, asked if it did not entitle India to be treated on a par with other members of the United Nations. He said that no regular post-war reconstruction plans were being thought out by the Indian Government, whereas the U.S.A., Britain and other countries were actively planning for their peace-time future. He pleaded that war industries should be made permanent. In overseas trade the Government should see to it that the commerce and industry of this country did not occupy a subordinate position, but a position of equality with other countries.

An emphatic demand for the immediate transfer of power to Indian hands was made by *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*, Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Party, who asserted that the present Government of India was completely divorced from public opinion and did not enjoy the confidence of the people.

He said : "It is most unfortunate that although every other country which is involved in this war is making an all-out effort, in India alone the Government and the people are total strangers. It is, therefore, natural that the India Government, not enjoying the confidence of the people, should have its actions looked upon with suspicion." The Nawabzada observed that "Indianization without popularization" was like changing a gramophone without changing the records. Criticism of the present Government would continue, he said, until real power was transferred to the representatives of the people. "If you want the people to be with you, you must take into your confidence at least those parties which are willing to co-operate with you." He claimed that the assertion that Britain's readiness to transfer power had started trouble in the country did not hold water. On the other hand, it was an excuse for not transferring power. He referred to the Home Member's speech in which the latter had declared the Congress a party of rebels who had forfeited the rights of citizenship. The Government's demand for unity amounted to the Muslim League going and negotiating with the Congress, which, according to Government, had forfeited the right to citizenship. This alone would show, he said, that there was no willingness on the part of the Government to part with power.

Explaining the Muslim League's view-point, the Nawabzada said that the Muslim League had left the decision about Pakistan to the Muslim masses who had been characterized by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru as "not reactionary and are with the Congress." If that was so, there could have been no apprehension among the Hindus that the League might influence the decision of the Muslim masses. The apprehension, however, was based on the fact that the Muslim masses were the Muslim League and the Muslim League was the Muslim masses. He asserted that the demand for Pakistan was not undemocratic and said : "Democracy does not mean tyranny of the numerical majority over the minority but a system of

ascertaining the will of the people as to how they desire to be governed." About Sir Frederick James' ideal of a United States of India, the speaker said that there must be independent States before there could be a United States of India. He appealed to the Hindus to realize that it was impossible to ignore 100,000,000 Muslims and their separate existence. Appealing to the United Nations, he concluded: "If you want to save humanity and shorten this war, you must fully mobilize the resources of this country. Today only 10% of these resources have been utilized. The response to war loans is a case in point. India has immense resources and manpower, and even now the fullest support and co-operation of the parties willing to co-operate are available to the United Nations. Take the hand of friendship now offered once again, for nothing will satisfy the people of India unless real power is transferred to their representatives. It is for you to make the choice."

Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, winding up the debate, concluded with a stern warning to the Bombay Cotton Market. "He had," he declared, "rarely seen a more disgusting or disgraceful spectacle than that provided by that market during the last few days. There was no justification to have run the level of the price of cotton as had been done. If they indulge in this type of action, Government will mobilize the whole of its resources in order to defeat and crush them (Loud cheers). They have not only made it difficult to provide cheap cloth for the poor man; they have introduced a serious obstacle in our programme of crop planning in order to secure the food production which we need to solve the food problem; they have acted in the most anti-social way they possibly could. It is nothing less than economic sabotage. I assure the House that Government is certainly not going to take that kind of thing lying down and are going to take the most drastic steps to prevent it. I have learned a lesson from the behaviour of the market, and if the speculators think I have said my last word on February 27 they may find they are very badly mistaken" (Renewed cheers). About post-war reconstruction, Sir Jeremy, earlier in his speech, said that Government were acutely conscious that reconstruction had become an urgent matter and it had to be dealt with now and they had decided to take up the matter at the highest level. They had decided that reconstruction should be dealt with by a committee of the Executive Council in the same way as the gearing-up of the war effort was dealt with by the War Resources Committee of the Council. The Viceroy would naturally be President of the committee as he was President of the War Resources Committee. The deputy president would be Sir J. P. Srivastava who had been asked to undertake the responsibility of presiding at all ordinary meetings. There would be various sub-committees of that committee and these would be presided over by members in charge of the subjects most directly affected, and in these sub-committees the association of non-official representatives would naturally arise. One of these committees would be the committee dealing with internal and international trade. The Finance Member emphasized that reconstruction was essentially the work of the whole Government and it could not be a question to be left to a single department to be set up. About the Reconstruction Fund itself, the Finance Member made it clear that he would not hesitate to abandon the idea of segregating funds if the House did not like it. It was not necessary for the idea of the Reconstruction Fund that a part of the sterling balances should be removed from the Issue Department of the Reserve Bank. It might be found equally effective to determine what was the amount of these assets which should be earmarked for post-war reconstruction.

On the question of defence expenditure, Sir Jeremy observed that he was not so innocent or foolish as to hope that in the task which he had had to undertake of arguing with HMG the case on behalf of the Government of India and on behalf of the country of India he would receive any single word of approbation whatever might be the outcome of his efforts; and he had not been disappointed in that expectation (Laughter). He accepted the observation of one of the speakers that the test of Government's efforts in this respect should be the results. Then could it be argued, he asked, that the charge which India had been asked to bear was unreasonable in relation to the magnitude of the cost of defending this country in the circumstances which arose during the last 12 months. If members looked at a country like New Zealand with a population of approximately 3,000,000 people, they would be surprised to find that the defence expenditure borne by a country of that size was not entirely incomparable with the Defence Budget that India has hitherto had to shoulder. There were certain people who would argue that this was not India's war in the sense in which it was a war that concerned other

members of the Commonwealth or the United Nations. He knew that very few members of the House would support that argument, but there was a considerable body of Indian opinion which put forward that view. Nevertheless, he was surprised to find that same body of opinion considered that India should make a profit out of the war and they did not think there was anything tainted in the profits which accrued to them from activities no part of which, they say, should be charged to the cost of India.

Dealing with critics who argued that the Financial Settlement regarding war expenditure laid upon India a burden which was beyond her capacity, the Finance Member pointed out that these critics were in a dilemma. On the one hand they complained of the amount of the total cost charged against India, and on the other expressed considerable uneasiness about the size of the sterling balances mounting in India's credit. Surely they must realize that in so far as the cost of operations was not borne by India, to that extent the payments she received from HMG must increase and the sterling balances must also increase with them. The cost of war fell either on the one or the other side, and you could not legitimately complain at the same time that India's defence expenditure was too high and the sterling balances which accrued to India were too high. Moreover, was there any one who, when his house was on fire and he and his family were in danger, would say it was too expensive to save himself and his family and property? Sir Jeremy then spoke on the difficulty of obtaining exact information about Lease-Lend supplies, particularly the difficulties of determining on whose account various categories of goods were received, whether they were on account of HMG or of India herself, and also the complications introduced by the non-arrival or delayed arrival of documents giving the value or quantity of goods, and so on. It was because of these difficulties and not because of any secretiveness that fuller information could not be given at this stage. Accounts could only be made up at the end of the year when it was known for what particular purposes the articles had been utilized, and this was being done in respect of 1942 in which year Lease-Lend supplies first began to arrive in India in substantial quantities. About Sir C. Jehangir's estimate of the proceeds of EPT still outstanding, the Finance Member expressed disagreement with his figure and said that Government had gone into the matter with some care, but he was aware of the difficulties and was making every effort to ensure that the lag between the time when the tax became available and was collected was shortened as far as possible. The whole of the Moslem League Party and some members of the Nationalist Party voted against the Government, while other Nationalist members and all members of the Independent Party voted with the Government.

18th. MARCH :—The Assembly today passed the Finance Bill without division, after agreeing to 2 official amendments of a minor character. The amendments were moved by Sir John Sheehy and were for the omission of the provisions to sub-clauses 5 and 7 of clause 5 of the Bill. Sir John explained that these provisions had been included in the Bill by inadvertence.

During discussion of the clauses, *Pandit Nilkantha Das's* amendment for the omission of the salt tax was lost without division. So were Mr. A. N. *Chattopadhyaya's* amendment seeking to reduce from 1 anna to $\frac{1}{2}$ anna the postage rate for every tola or fraction thereof exceeding a tola and Mr. *Laichand Navalrai's* amendment to reduce from 6 to 4 annas the parcel rate over 40 tolas.

TOBACCO EXCISE BILL

The House also passed today the 1st reading of the Tobacco Excise Bill and was discussing the clauses when it rose for the day. Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta* declared that the tax would press more heavily on the lower grades of tobacco than on the higher and would, therefore, hit the poor man more than the rich. Mr. T. T. *Krishnamachari* regarded the Bill as an invasion of the provincial sphere of taxation and said that in making the agriculturists responsible for filling complicated forms and returns, the Government showed total ignorance of the Indian agriculturists' condition. Mr. *Hossainbhai Laljee* considered that this obligation imposed on the agriculturist would lead to harassment and be an additional tax on him because he would have to employ someone else to fill in forms. Messrs A. N. *Chattopadhyaya*, *Azhar Ali* and A. N. *Dam* opposed the Bill. Pt. *Nilkantha Das*, describing tobacco as "an index of the conquest of the civilized East by the uncivilized West" (laughter), declared himself in favour of the tax, but asked Government not to "molest" the cultivator in levying it. Dr. *Bannerjee* opposed the tax on country tobacco. *Maulana Zafarali*, after remarking that he could not

compose verses without a "hookah" in front of him (laughter), asked that the rules under the Bill should be examined by a committee of the House before enforcement. Mr. *Govind Deshmukh* suggested that the filling in of forms should be Government's responsibility and not the cultivator's. Sir *Jeremy Raisman* explained that though the idea of introducing the tax occurred to him at the time of last budget, it was realized that the matter required a great deal of careful work and accordingly an officer was placed on special duty to study the matter in all its details. That officer made a report from which the Finance Member concluded that the tax was feasible and that there were no serious difficulties provided certain important principles were kept in mind. One of these was that the tax should be levied at a point most removed from the cultivator. Government had in fact taken the greatest care to refrain as far as possible from any undue interference with the grower. The Finance Member claimed that so far from being any disadvantage, the tax would be a great advantage to the grower. In the course of the Government's investigation, numerous ways of improving the position of the grower had been found, and those concerned with the improvement of the grower's condition, the quality of the leaf and the conditions of marketing regarded the Rs. 10 lakhs allotted for the grower's benefit as a very useful sum indeed and considered that a great deal could be done with it. The House passed the motion for consideration, and during discussion of the clauses rejected without a division Mr. *Chattopaddhya's* amendment proposing omission of the tax on country tobacco. The House then adjourned till Saturday, the 20th. March, when the Bill was passed by 42 votes to 23. The Muslim League and the Nationalist Party voted against the Bill. All amendments moved by the Nationalist Party were lost. The only amendment accepted was the one moved by Sir *George Spence*, Secretary Legislative Department, to define "factory" as any premises in which tobacco was manufactured.

During the debate on the Bill Sir *Jeremy Raisman*, the Finance Member assured the House that it would be the primary care and object of Government to see that the tax was collected with the minimum inconvenience to the grower and in a manner which would not constitute a tax on agriculture. Moving consideration of the *Vanapati Excise Bill*, the Finance Member said that the import of vegetable oil which was as high as 458, 000 cwt. in 1929 fell away until it was practically negligible. The total production at present in India was estimated at about 100,000 tons p.a. There was further potential capacity for expansion, but the difficulty of getting plant and metal containers and of transportation were some of the factors which restricted expansion. He refuted the idea that he had a prejudice against this commodity. He recognized that this was a useful food product and an element in the diet of the people. As for the objection to a "kitchen tax," he said he was satisfied that it would not be possible to found a system of taxation in India on a basis which entirely excluded taxation of articles of food. Judging from figures in his possession, it was curious that the price level which had been put up following the announcement of the duty was at the present moment only a little higher than in December. In fact, prices had reached a point at which it was impossible for the trade at the present moment to pass the duty on to the consumer. A greater part of the tax would come out of the profits of the trade and not from consumer. Moving that the Bill be circulated, *Sardar Sant Singh* asserted that, notwithstanding public prejudice in the past, *Vanapati ghee* had come to be used as an independent medium of cooking and occupied its own place beside ghee. He pleaded that the public be given a chance to discuss the evils and benefits arising out of this taxation. *Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan*, declared that members of the Muslim League Party had decided to oppose every taxation measure of Government, irrespective of its merits, because when people had no confidence in the Government they did not like to place more and more money into its hands. Government was only interested in the Assembly passing Bills to raise taxes and was absolutely unresponsive to public demands and wishes. He claimed also that Government had different standards for different communities. Sir *Frederick James* wanted to know the reason why Government selected *Vanapati* for taxation. Was it due to the fact that there were no administrative difficulties in respect of this trade, he asked. He, however, did not oppose the tax as it did not amount to much and was only a war measure. Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta* said that even if *Vanapati*

was left uncovered by a tax, Government would be able to balance its budget by other ways and means. He, therefore, appealed to Government to strike a compromise with the Opposition and respect their wishes. His main complaint was that the poor were taxed by Government and at the same time fleeced by the market and the cumulative effect of it all was that their vitality was being sapped. *Sir Cowasji Jehangir* said that the vegetable product industry was fully organized and the manufacturer would be able to see that tax was paid by the consumer. *Mr. Ramratan Gupta* took the view that it was not fair to tax a vital part of the poor man's food. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi* and *Bhai Parmanand* also opposed taxation of the poor. *Sir Jeremy Raisman*, replying to the debate, opposed circulation of the Bill because it was a simple measure. He explained that he had never said that such and such a tax was merely a war-time or emergency tax. He knew that a certain amount of taxation which had been necessitated by the war would, in due course, come under review and he trusted that a time might come when it would not be necessary to pinch the demands of the State so high. He, however, would not give any kind of guarantee on that subject. Replying to other points of objection, *Sir Jeremy* reiterated what he had emphasized on several occasions before that nobody would be happier than he if not a single rupee of the E.P.T. accrued to Government from the operation of the textile industry. If those who carried on the industry were content to trade upon a basis which left them nothing more than their standard profits, he would be quite happy. He would repeat that if that industry or any other industry would so organize itself as to sell its products to the poor at a price which would not yield profits higher than what they made in their standard periods, he was prepared to base his budget on that basis. (Cheers): He referred to the numerous amendments tabled for the reduction of the duty and in order to cut the proceedings short, announced that if the Chair would admit an amendment reducing the tax from Rs. 7 to Rs. 5 per cwt. he would be prepared to accept it. *Sardar Sant Singh* moved an amendment to this effect and it was passed. The House then adjourned till March, 23.

RAILWAY CONVENTION RESOLUTION

23rd. MARCH :—The Assembly to-day carried without a division the motion of the War Transport Member, *Sir Edward Benthall*, for the election of a committee of 9 to serve with the War Transport and Finance Members, and the Financial Commissioner, Railways to consider matters arising out of clause IV of the Railway Convention resolution adopted by the House earlier in the session. A number of speakers, including *Sir Ziauddin Ahmed*, *Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur*, *Mr. Jannadas Mehta* and *Mr. Latchand Navalrai* stressed the importance of enlarging the committee and its scope. *Sir Edward Benthall*, replying, said that the resolution gave the committee a wide enough scope to discuss all the Convention, and that after discussion with party leaders he had decided on the size of the committee. It was desirable that it should be a small and efficient working body not exceeding 12.

TEA CONTROL AMEND. BILL

After disposing of all demands for supplementary grants, the House took up *Mr. T. S. Pillay's* Bill to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, seeking to extend the measure for the period of the war and 2 years thereafter. *Mr. Pillay*, moving consideration of the Bill, explained that the interests concerned had unanimously agreed to extension and said that control would be so worked as to leave ample tea for consumption in India.

Maulvi Abdul Ghani moved circulation of the Bill and was supported by *Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmed* who opposed control of production declaring that it was against the consumer's interests. The consumer, he pointed out, had now to pay for his tea 3 times the price he once paid for it. *Mr. N. M. Joshi* dwelt on the conditions of labour in plantations and said that their wages were the lowest: paid to industrial labour in this country amounting to Rs. 7 or 8 a month to a man, Rs. 5 or 6 to a woman and Rs. 4 or 5 to a child. It was true they got certain concessions, such as 1/5 of an acre of land each for tilling, huts for living in and fuel; but the labourers suffered from restriction on freedom of movement; and labour legislation, such as the Payment of Wages Act or the Maternity Benefit Act, did not apply to them.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths, giving figures, said the total quantity exported was

421,000,000 lbs. leaving a balance in India of 147,000,000 lbs. against an estimate of internal consumption placed at its highest at less than 130,000,000 lbs. Any rise in price, therefore, did not arise from shortage of supplies. Speaking for the planters, he said that they welcomed every fall in prices and the various planters' associations had agreed that at no time should exports be allowed to go so high as to lead to a shortage in India. Control of the production under the Act had, he said, rescued the industry from a precarious condition.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour member, claimed that much serious blame could not be laid at Government's doors, for of the 5 main recommendations of the Labour Commission 4 were fundamentally of provincial concern and 1, namely, the establishment of a Wage Fixing Board, had been given effect to by the Centre and an Act was already on the Statute Book. About the other 4 recommendations, neither the Assam Government nor Mr. Joshi himself moved in the matter until at the Central Government's instance the Congress Ministry in Assam appointed a committee of inquiry, but that committee languished following a conflict within itself. Soon after that war broke out. The protection of labour interests the Government regarded as of paramount importance, said Dr. Ambedkar. No exact information was available about wages in tea plantations, but it was noticeable that conditions in the plantations were unregulated and they varied enormously from garden to garden. That was a state of affairs which the Government of India would not tolerate. It was also clear that the Government could not enter upon any legislation unless they had sufficient material brought before them as a result of an impartial inquiry. An inquiry of this nature was one of the riders put forward by the Labour Commission itself. The question, however, was whether an inquiry could be instituted at present. It would not be right to start any inquiry in Assam or Bengal where the bulk of the plantations existed, namely some 607,000 acres, because it would have a disturbing effect in areas which were greatly exposed to enemy action. Could the Government begin an inquiry into the plantations in S. India? They could, but the acreage there was only 163,000, representing a very small proportion of the total tea area in the country and it seemed to the Government of India that no good could accrue to labour as a result of an inquiry into such a small part of the area. Closure was moved and accepted at this stage and Mr. Pillay, replying, said nothing of value could be gained by circulation and pointed out that extension of control was necessary in the consumers' interests. The circulation was lost, and the House agreed to the motion for consideration. Further debate on the Bill was adjourned till the next day, the 24th. March, when the House passed the 3rd reading of the Bill by 41 votes to 31. Mr. M. Nauman, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Sir Zia-ul-Din Ahmed and Mr. Govind Deshmukh opposed the Bill which, in their view, took no note of the consumers' interests. Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Hussainbhai Lalji argued that the Bill was necessary in order to protect the interests of the industry. Dr. Bannerji, while not opposing the principle, asked that its application should be properly made. Mr. T. S. Pillay said that the consumers' interest was constantly present before Government and that the Bill was in the consumers' interest and was necessary if the industry was to be placed on a reasonable maintenance basis.

HINDU INTESTATE SUCCESSION BILL

The House next took up Sir Sultan Ahmed's motion for reference to a joint committee of both Houses of the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu law relating to intestate succession.

Pt. Nilkanta Das moved circulation of the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon by Dec. 31, 1945, while Mr. Bijnath Bajoria moved postponement of consideration till after the cessation of hostilities. Mr. Bajoria made it clear that he did not mean cessation of hostilities between man and woman. (Laughter.) The Chair ruled Mr. Bajoria's motion out of order under the rules.

Sir Sultan, commending his motion, expressed the hope that the Bill would be one of a series of measures which would form the constituents of a comprehensive code of Hindu law and simplify the rules laid down under that system by different commentators on the original codes and give them a statutory basis. After referring to the series of private Bills which sought to remedy defects, Sir Sultan discussed the main structure of the Bill.

From every point of view, political or otherwise, the assimilation of the 2 schools in matters of succession was to be welcomed, and indeed so far as the Mitakshara jurisdictions were concerned, the Legislature had already by the Act

of 1929 given a higher place to the son's daughter, the daughter's daughter, the sister and the sister's son, and in the circumstances, it would not be fair to suggest that any violent change had been made which would shock the conscience of even the orthodox Sanatanist. "Our aim and endeavour should be to apply the true Hindu spiritual outlook to the task of helping Hindu society to move on with the march of time. It is not foreign to that culture if we attempt to blend stability with movement, eternal truth with external evolution." The Bill, he said, had to come into force on Jan. 1, 1946. The main reason for this was to give Governors' provinces sufficient time to pass complementary legislation in respect of agricultural land which was a provincial subject. Any enactment relating to it had been held by the Federal Court to be outside the competence of the Centre.

Bhai Parmanand, opposing the Bill and supporting postponement, asked where was the urgency of a Bill of such a revolutionary character? For those modern Westernized Hindus who were fond of changes in Hindu Law, there was the Civil Marriage Act of which they could take advantage. What right had these people to enforce this Bill on all Hindus and attempt to change the whole law? The Bill, in his view, would destroy the family, which was the unit of Hindu society, and lead to fragmentation and disintegration of property. *Bhai Parmanand* asked that the Bill should either be postponed or made an issue in the next election, and then proceeded with if the electorate supported it.

Mrs. Renuka Ray, the woman representative specially nominated for the debate on the Bill, did not think that the Bill could have come as a surprise to any one. The vast majority of opinion on the Bill was in favour of it. She referred to the countrywide agitation that was carried on 10 years ago in favour of women's rights and she maintained that it was not necessary to wait for the new elections to discover how far the country was in favour of the Bill. If a referendum were taken today, the result would show that Hindus were not only willing to support the principles of the Bill but would go much further. *Mrs. Ray* hoped that the Bill would mark the beginning of a new era of social reform in India.

Pt. Nilkanta Das disputed the claim that the Congress Party if it were present would have supported the Bill. *Mr. Deshmukh's* Bill, he said, originally proposed "absolute estate" for widows, and that provision was opposed both by the Government and the Congress Party. *Pt. Nilkanta Das* asked if it was the intention to amend the Code of Manu.

Sir Sultan Ahmed: Certainly not.

Pt. Das had not concluded when the House adjourned.

DETENUS & POLITICAL PRISONERS

25th. MARCH:—*Mr. T. P. Krishnamachari* moved to-day his resolution recommending drastic revision of the Government's policy on the treatment of political prisoners and detenues and asking that members of the Central Legislature should be allowed to visit prisoners and interview political prisoners so that they could draw attention to the inconveniences and restrictions imposed on these prisoners with a view to eliminating them.

Four amendments were moved. *Mr. N. M. Joshi* wanted prisoners to be provided with better living conditions in jails and adequate provision made for the maintenance of their families and for an impartial review of their cases. *Pt. Nilkanta Das* wanted the revision to be such as to facilitate the release of those who were in favour of co-operation in the war effort. The amendments moved by *Mr. Neogy* asked that at least 2 interviews with relatives and friends be allowed to prisoners who should be permitted to receive and dispatch at least 2 letters every month.

Mr. Krishnamachari made it clear that the resolution did not ask for the release of such prisoners or seek to discuss Government's policy. He also argued that the question of treatment of these prisoners was within the purview of of the Central Government.

Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member, speaking in response to a request to explain the Government's attitude at an early stage of the debate, said that the number of persons detained in connexion with the Congress movement was 8,120 on Feb. 1, 1943, and he claimed that the House would agree that, considering the extent of the movement the number was small and that there was no policy of indiscriminate arrest, for otherwise the number would have been very much larger. The Home Member referred to *Mr. Joshi's* recommendations following his visit to the Deoli detention camp and said that the Government of India had addressed

the provincial Governments on a number of matters to which Mr. Joshi had drawn attention including classification, diet allowance, receipt of funds from outside, family and personal allowances, censorship of correspondence, release on parole, etc. The provinces had generally accepted the Government of India's views in the matter; but the Home Member explained that it was not possible for the Central Government to take all these matters out of the provincial Governments, hands nor could the Central Government be responsible for the administration of these matters, particularly where they had Ministries responsible to popular legislatures which were the proper place in which questions should be addressed with regard to treatment of these prisoners.

Sardar Sant Singh : What happens when they refuse to answer questions in provincial legislatures ?

Sir Reginald remarked that the Ministries were put in power by the people.

A voice : When about provinces where legislatures are not functioning ?

The Home Member replied it was not his fault that the legislatures were not functioning in certain provinces. Those legislatures were withdrawn by the very people who were security prisoners now. (Laughter). Sir Reginald proceeded to point out that the Central Government were thus concerned with the Chief Commissioner's provinces and there they had put into practice Mr. Joshi's recommendations which had been accepted. On the whole, the treatment of prisoners there was humane and reasonably liberal in the matter of privileges, but of course the latitude allowed and the privileges given must be consistent with the reasons and objects of detention and consistent with the practical possibilities of jails administration. Of these practical possibilities the Governments themselves must be the judges. Security prisoners detained in connection with the present movement, said the Home Member, were governed by the same rules that applied to all security prisoners in general, but there were certain modifications based on the reasons and objects of their detention. Those modifications were precautionary and not penal. The movement, such as it was, continued "and we must remember that as active organizers most of the persons detained were probably even more dangerous than many of those who were convicted, who were merely tools of these other people."

The Government, he said, took a very serious view of the dangers to which India was exposed by the movement and they could not take any risk in dealing with them. The policy from the first had been to segregate these people and prevent them from establishing any contact with the outside world, barring letters on purely personal and domestic matters. No relaxation of these restrictions could at present be contemplated because the war was not yet won, the danger was still there, and the Congress movement was not yet dead. The underground organization of the Congress still existed and was bent upon carrying on the movement. The more Government relaxed these restrictions the more cases occurred of escapes from jail and mutiny in jail.

"We must have something tangible to convince us that India's obligations for her own defence and for the defence of the United Nations stand in no further danger from these people." So long as the Congress resolution stood, so long as the underground organization existed, the Government could take no more risks. Sir Reginald went on to remind the House once more that the restrictions placed on these prisoners were governed by the nature and continued existence of the situation with which the Government had to deal, but at the same time the position of these people had in the past received careful consideration. These persons would not be detained indefinitely, Government were anxious to relieve pressure which existed in the jails. The House must not suppose that the present state of things was at all welcome to the Government, and with due caution they would do the best they could to let these people go, but in the meanwhile there was no room for special investigation into the condition on their detention.

Further debate on the resolution was postponed till the next session, today being the last day for non-official resolutions this session. The House then adjourned.

HINDU INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE BILL

26th. MARCH :—A Bill to validate marriages between Hindus belonging to the same "gotra" or "pravar" and between Hindus belonging to different subdivisions of the same caste, was discussed in the Assembly today on a motion by the mover, Mr. *Govind Deshmukh*, who asked for its reference to a select committee. Mr. Deshmukh said that the Bill was an enabling measure and as such should not be objected to from the orthodox viewpoint. The question might be asked why people who wanted a reform of this kind should not take advantage of the Civil

Marriage Act. The reply was that a Hindu marrying under that Act suffered "civil death" and was immediately separated from the joint family. Mr. Deshmukh made it clear, however, that if the Hindu Marriage Bill drafted by the Rau Committee which had already been introduced in the Assembly had a reasonable prospect of being proceeded with soon, he would withdraw his Bill.

Mrs. *Renuka Roy* hoped that the Rau Committee's Bill would be taken up in the next session and that members would give the Law Member an assurance that it would receive their support, so that it could be carried through even without it being referred to a select committee. Women in India, she added, were against piecemeal or patchwork amendment of the type attempted by Mr. Deshmukh and she hoped that the Rau Committee's Bill was only the first chapter in a comprehensive revision of the Hindu Marriage Code.

Sir *Sultan Ahmed* expressed sympathy with the mover and Mrs. Roy, but said that the orthodox point of view had also to be taken into account. He himself was prepared to proceed with the Rau Committee's Bill today, but that was not possible and he could only say that it would be proceeded with when the time was propitious. At present he was opposed to Mr. Deshmukh's Bill.

Mr. Deshmukh withdrew his motion.

The Assembly, however, agreed to the continuance of Mr. *G. V. Deshmukh's* two Bills, one further to amend the Special Marriage Act and the other to give Hindu married women a right to separate residence and maintenance in certain circumstances. Mr. Deshmukh (Congress) attended the House today in order to make his motion for their continuance.

The amendments made by the Council of State in Mr. *Abdul Ghani's* Muslim Wakfs Bill were accepted by the House which adjourned till the 29th.

HINDU INTESTATE SUCCESSION BILL

29th. MARCH:—The Assembly today resumed the debate on Sir *Sultan Ahmed's* motion for reference to a joint committee of the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill. *Pandit Nilakanta Das* urged postponement of the consideration of the Bill till after the war. He said there was no evidence that women in India wanted the Bill, that the procedure adopted in ascertaining public opinion on it was defective; that there were many public men who opposed it. Mr. *V. D. Savarkar*, President of the Hindu Mahasabha, for instance, wanted postponement in view of the strong opinion expressed against it.

Mr. *Ramratan Gupta* supported the principle of giving daughters a proper share in property but objected to extending this principle to a daughter's son or daughter and so on. He also objected to retrospective effect being given to the Bill. He felt that the publicity given to it was not sufficient.

Mr. *Govind Deshmukh* said the question of a daughter's right to property had been agitating the public mind ever since the Deshmukh Act and it could not therefore be said that the problem had not received sufficient public attention. Even if more opinion remained to be elicited, there was time to do so before the Select Committee met. Those who took their stand on Manu should in his opinion remember that the structure of Hindu society had changed greatly since those days as it must if it was a living organism.

Opponents of the Bill said the measure would lead to fragmentation of holdings, but this could be remedied by legislation providing for consolidation of holdings and by giving the right of pre-emption to a co-tenant when one of them wished to dispose of his holding.

Mr. *Bajinath Bajoria* moved an amendment for circulation of the Bill till Dec 31. 1943. He strongly objected to the Bill being brought at the far end of the session. The Government of Bengal had expressed the opinion that the consideration of this Bill should be postponed till after the war. Coming from Bengal, he knew that the people there with bombs overhead and mines like this Bill under their feet (laughter) were not in a fit state of mind to give proper consideration to a measure of far-reaching social reform.

Mr. *Jamnadas Mehta* strongly supported the demand for more time to consider the Bill. He said he had received a representation from the Gujerat Bhatia Stree Mandal saying that they had not had sufficient time to study it. He pointed out that social custom at present gave, ensured and perpetuated what the law might not at present provide as a matter of legal right for women. He knew wealthy Hindu families who had given dowries and presents to daughters far in excess of anything that sons could expect as legal shares in the property. He supported the demand that until autonomy was restored in the Provinces,

measures necessary to complete the legislation on the subject should not be undertaken. The Assembly then adjourned till the next day, the 30th. March, when it agreed without a division to refer the Bill to a joint select committee of both Houses consisting of 18 members. The House earlier rejected two motions for circulation, one by Pt. *Nilakanta Das* till Dec. 31, 1945, and the other by Mr. *B. Bajoria* till Dec 31, 1943. Mr. Bajoria's amendment was lost by 35 votes to 7. Mr. *K. C. Neogy*, continuing the debate on the select committee motion on this Bill, expressed sympathy with the complaint that sufficient time had not been given for public opinion to express itself fully on a measure which, it must be remembered, was likely to give a rude shock to age-long traditions. He quoted a number of authorities to support his point of view that Hindu law and custom had undergone changes and these changes had been approved and sanctioned by authoritative exponents and commentators. It was this elastic and growing character of Hindu law that great Hindu judges of Bengal and Madras had stressed. Mr. Neogy suggested that when the Bill was passed it should be placed on the Statute Book as a permissive measure in order to give the provinces sufficient time to pass complementary legislation in respect of agricultural property. This Bill would, in that case, be brought into force in the provinces as and when complementary legislation was passed. Otherwise, there would be two different rules of succession and that would lead to complication. Mr. *A. M. Dam*, supporting the amendment for circulation till Dec. 31, 1945, said it was not a dilatory motion because even the Rau Committee did not expect the Bill to become an Act till 1946. Mr. *Ghulam B Nairang*, explaining the Muslim League's attitude, said that Islam gave the lead to the world in recognizing women as equal partners in life, and also the lead in raising the status of women in society to one of independence. Muslims would therefore emphatically endorse any measure undertaken to give women's rights practical shape and force. The Bill however concerned the personal law of the Hindu nation. The attitude of the Muslim League Party would therefore be one of benevolent neutrality. They would help and co-operate in passing any part of the Bill which was non-contentious and would remain neutral on any part of it which was hotly contested. That attitude would be maintained by them, even though he regretted to find that Hindu members of the House obstructed and criticized measures which related solely to Muslim personal law.

Sir Sultan Ahmed, replying on the debate, said that if necessary he was prepared to examine before the select committee two or three experts particularly from Bengal who might be of help to the committee. He was also prepared to give time for expression of public opinion on the Bill if it emerged from the select committee in a form that made this necessary. He gave the assurance that the select committee would not be packed with supporters of the Bill but would have on it men who held very strong views against the Bill. He agreed to invite the opinion of one or two women's associations in Bombay or Poona who had not expressed their views. Beyond that he would not go. He was not prepared to accept the motion for circulation. The Law Member explained why circulation was unnecessary and pointed out that since April 1941, when the Rau Committee made its preliminary report based on a questionnaire previously issued, the subject had been constantly before the public and the opinions received on the Bill in its present form covered 107 closely printed pages.

LEADERS REFUSED TO INTERVIEW GANDHI

2nd. APRIL—Mr. *T. T. Krishnamachari* attempted to move an adjournment to-day to discuss the Government's refusal to permit leaders to interview Mr. Gandhi. The Home Member, *Sir Reginald Maxwell* objecting said that the application for an interview was presumably made to the Viceroy as head of the Government of India and his reply was based on the policy already laid down by the Government in regard to the conditions of detention, a policy to which Government had consistently adhered. There had been no change in that policy, which had been in existence for a considerable time and had often been before the House already.

Mr. *N. M. Joshi* said that there had been a great change in the situation. In reply to the President's question it was stated that the interview sought was for political purposes. The *Chair* observed that if the purpose was purely political and aimed at resolving the deadlock, it was not a new matter. The motion was, therefore, out of order. The House at this stage adjourned "*sine die*."

The Bengal Legislative Assembly

LIST OF MEMBERS

Speaker.

1. THE HON'BLE SYED NAUSER ALI

Deputy Speaker.

2. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY

*For the Council of Ministers
and Parliamentary*

Secretaries See page 2.

1. General Constituencies

14. MR. JATINDRA NATH BASU.
15. MR. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU.
16. MR. ISWAR DAS JALAN.
17. DR. J. M. DAS GUPTA.
18. MR. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA.
19. MR. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE.
20. MR. BARADA PRASANNA PAI.
21. MR. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI.
22. RAI HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI.
23. DR. NALINAKSHA SANYAL.
24. VACANT.
25. MR. PRATUL CHANDRA GANGULY.
26. MAHARAJKUMAR UDAY CHAND
MAHTAB.
27. MR. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE.
28. DR. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJEE.
29. SRIJUT MANINDRA BHUSHAN SINHA
30. MR. KAMALKRISHNA RAY.
31. MR. DEBENDRA LALL KHAN.
32. MR. KISHORI PATI ROY.
33. DR. GOBINDA CHANDRA BHAWMIK.
34. MR. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL.
35. MR. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI.
36. MR. DHIRENDRA NARAYAN
MUKERJI.
37. MR. SUKUMAR DUTTA.
38. MR. MANMATHA NATH ROY.
39. RAI JOGESH CHANDRA SEN
BAHADUR.
40. MR. P. BANNERJI.
41. MR. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY.
42. MR. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL.
43. MR. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE.
44. BABU NAGENDRA NATH SEN.
45. MR. SATYA PRIYA BANERJEE.
46. MR. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR.
47. MR. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU.
48. BABU KHAGENDRA NATH DAS
GUPTA.
49. MR. JOJINDRA NATH
CHAKRABARTY.
50. BABU NARENDRA NARAYAN
CHAKRABARTY.
51. MR. ATUL CHANDRA SEN.
52. MR. KIRAN SANKAR ROY.
53. MR. CHARU CHANDRA ROY.
54. BABU JANENDRA CHANDRA
MAJUMDAR.

55. MR. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS
56. SRIJUT NARENDRA NATH DAS
GUPTA
57. MR. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL
58. MR. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA
59. MR. HARENDRA KUMAR SUR
60. MRS. NELLI SEN GUPTA
61. MR. DAMBAR SINGH GURUNG
62. MR. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI
63. MR. BANKU BEHARI MANDAL
64. BABU DEBENDRA NATH DAS
65. SRIJUT ASHUTOSH MULLICK
66. MR. KRISHNA PRASAD MANDAL
67. MR. HARENDRA NATH DOLUI
68. BABU RADHANATH DAS
69. MR. PULIN BEHARI MULLICK
70. MR. HEM CHANDRA NASAR
71. MR. ANUKUL CHANDRA DAS
72. BABU LAKSHMI NARAYAN BISWAS
73. RAI SAHIB KIRIT BHUSAN DAS
74. MR. RASIK LAL BISWAS
75. MR. PATIRAM RAY
76. MR. TARINICHARAN PRAMANIK
77. BABU PREMHHARI BARMA
78. BABU SHYAMA PRASAD BARMAN
79. BABU UPENDRANATH BARMAN
80. MR. PUSPAJIT BARMA
81. BABU KSHETRA NATH SINGHA
82. BABU MADHUSUDAN SARKAR
83. MR. DHANANJOY ROY
84. MR. AMRITA LAL MANDAL
85. MR. MONOMOCHAN DAS
86. MR. BIRAT CHANDRA MANDAL
87. MR. PROMATHA KANJAN THAKUR
88. MR. UPENDRANATH EBAR
89. JAGAT CHANDRA MANDAL
90. MR. M. A. H. ISPAHANI
91. MR. K. NOORUDDIN
92. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI MD.
SOLAIMAN
93. MAULVI ABDUL HASHIM
94. MAULVI MD. ABDUR RASHEED
95. KHAN BAHADUR DR. SYED
MUHAMMAD SIDDIQUE
96. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI
ALFAZUDDIN AHMED
97. MAULVI ABDUL QUASEM
98. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI S. ABDUR
RAUF
99. KHAN SHAIB JASIMUDDIN AHMED
100. YOUSUF MIRZA
101. KHAN BAHADUR A. F. M. ABDUR
RAHMAN
102. MR. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED
103. MR. MOHAMMAD MOHSIN ALI
104. DR. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK
105. MR. SYED BADRUDDUJA
106. SAHIBZADA KAWAN JAH SYED
KAZEM ALI MEERZA

107. MR. M. FARHAD RAJA CHOWDHURY
 108. MR. SYED NAUSHER ALI
 109. MAULVI WALIUR RAHMAN
 110. MR. SERAJAL ISLAM
 111. KHAN BAHADUR MAULANA.
 AHMED ALI ENYATPURI
 112. MR. ABDUL HAKEM
 113. MR. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY
 114. MR. SYED MUSTAGAWSAL HAQUE
 115. MAULVI MANIRUDDIN AKHAND
 116. MAULVI MOHAMMAD AMIR ALI MIA
 117. MAULVI M. MOSLEM ALI MOLLA
 118. MAULVI MAFIZUDDIN CHOUDHURY
 119. MAULVI HAFIZUDDIN CHOUDHURY
 120. MAULVI ABDUL JABBAR
 121. VACANT
 122. KHAN BAHADUR A. M. L. RAHMAN
 123. HAJI SAFIRUDDIN AHMED
 124. KHAN BAHADUR SHAH ABDUR RAUF
 125. KAZI EMDADUL HAQUE
 126. MR. MIA ABDUL HAFIZ
 127. MAULVI ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR
 128. MR. AHMED HOSSAIN
 129. MAULVI RAJIBUDDIN TARAFDAR
 130. MAULVI MOHAMMAD ISHAQUE
 131. DR. MAFIZUDDIN AHMED
 132. KHAN BAHADUR MOHAMMED ALI
 133. MAULVI AZHAR ALI
 134. MR. A. M. ABDUL HAMID
 135. MR. ABDUR RASHID MAHMOOD
 136. MR. ABDULLA-AL-MAHMOOD
 137. MR. MOHAMMAD BARAT ALI
 138. MAULVI ZAHUR AHMED
 CHOWDHURY
 139. MAULVI IDRIS AHMED MIA
 140. MAULANA MUHAMMAD ABDUL AZIZ
 141. MR. S. A. SALIM
 142. MAULVI MOHAMMED ABDUL HAKIM
 VIKRAMPURI
 143. MR. RAZAUR RAHMAN KHAN
 144. KHAN BAHADUR AULAD HOSSAIN
 KHAN
 145. MAULVI ABDUL LATIF BISWAS
 146. MAULVI MOHAMMAD ABDUS
 SHAHEED
 147. MR. SYED SAHAB ALUM
 148. MR. FAZLUR RAHMAN
 149. MR. MAHAMMAD ABDUL JABBAR
 150. MR. GIASUDDIN AHMED
 151. MR. ABDUL KARIM
 152. MAULVI ABDUL MAJID
 153. MAULVI ABDUL WAHED
 154. MAULANA SHAMSUL HUDA
 155. MAULVI ABDUL HAKIM
 156. AL-HADJ MAULVI MASUD ALI KHAN
 157. MR. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ
 158. MR. SYED HASAN ALI CHOWDHURY
 159. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI
 KABIRUDDIN KHAN
 160. MR. ABUL HOSSAIN AHMED
 161. MAULVI MOHAMMAD ISRAIL
 162. MAULVI ABDUL HAMID SHAH
 163. KHAN SAHIB HAMIDUDDIN AHMED
 164. MR. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED
 KHANDAKAR
 165. MAULVI AHMED ALI MEIDHA
 166. MR. YUSUF ALI CHOWDHURY
 167. MR. MAHAMMAD ABUL FAZL
 168. AL-HADJ GYASUDDIN AHMED
 CHOUDHURY
 169. MR. ABDUL KADER
 170. KHAN SAHIB MAULVI HATEMALLY
 JAMADAR
 171. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI SYED
 MUHAMMAD AFZAL
 172. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI HASHEM
 ALI KHAN
 173. MR. SADARUDDIN AHMED
 174. MR. ABDUL WAHAB KHAN
 175. MAULVI MOHAMMAD MOZAMMEL
 HUQ
 176. HAJI MAULVI TOFEL AHMED
 CHOWDHURY
 177. MAULVI MUSTUFA ALI DEWAN
 178. MR. MAQBUL HOSAIN
 179. MAULVI MAFIZUDDIN AHMED
 180. MR. RAMIZUDDIN AHMED
 181. MR. ASIMUDDIN AHMED
 182. MAULVI MAHAMMAD
 HASANUZZAMAN
 183. MAULVI JONAB ALI MAJUMDAR
 184. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI ABIDUR
 REZA CHOWDHURY
 185. MR. SHAHEDALI
 186. MAULVI MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM
 187. KHAN SAHIB MAULVI AMINULLAH
 188. MR. SHAH SYED GOLAM SARWAR
 HOSAINI
 189. MR. SYED AHMED KHAN
 190. MR. SYED ABDUL MAJID
 191. MAULVI ABDUR RAZZAK
 192. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI
 JALALUDDIN AHMED
 193. KHAN BAHADUR MOHAMMAD
 ANWARUL AZIM
 194. MAULANA MAHAMMAD
 MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI
 195. DR. SANAUULLAH
 196. KHAN BAHADUR MAULVI FAZLUL
 QADIR
 3. Women's Constituencies
 197. Miss MIRA DUTTA GUPTA
 198. MRS. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR
 199. MRS. HASINA MURSHED
 200. BEGUM FARHAT BANO KHANAM
 201. Miss P. B. BELL-HART
 4. Anglo-Indian Constituencies
 202. MR. J. W. CHIPPENDALE
 203. MR. L. T. MAGUIRE
 204. MR. O. GRIFFITHS
 5. European Constituencies
 205. MR. I. A. CLARK
 206. SIR HENRY BIRKMYRE, BART
 207. MR. R. J. HAWKINGS
 208. MR. A. K. STARK
 209. MR. J. H. SPELLER
 210. MR. R. R. HADDOW

211. MR. G. MORGAN
 212. MR. H. BRABANT SMITH
 213. MR. W. C. PATTON
 214. MR. J. W. R. STEVEN
 215. MR. J. F. SINCLAIR

6. Indian Christian Constituencies

216. DR. H. C. MUKHERJI
 217. MR. S. A. GOMES

7. Commerce & Industry Constituencies

218. MR. J. R. WALKAR
 219. MR. ROGERS HAYWOOD
 220. MR. M. A. F. HIRTZEL
 221. MR. D. GLADDING
 222. MR. R. M. SASSOON
 223. MR. DAVID HENDRY
 224. MR. W. C. WORDSWORTH
 225. MR. K. A. HAMILTON
 226. MR. H. R. NORTON
 227. W. A. M. WALKER
 228. MR. I. G. KENNEDY
 229. MR. C. W. MILES
 230. MR. G. G. MACGREGOR
 231. MR. R. B. WHITEHEAD
 232. MR. NALINI RANJAN SARKER
 233. SIZ HARI SANKAR PAUL
 234. MR. DEBI PRASAD KHAITAN
 235. RAI MOONGTU LALL TAPURIAH
 BAHADUR

236. MR. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI

8. Landholders' Constituencies

237. KUMAR SHIB SHEKHARESWAR RAY
 238. MAHARAJA SASIKANTA ACHARJYA
 CHOUDHURY
 239. RAI KSHIROD CHANDRA ROY
 BAHADUR
 240. MR. TARAK NATH MUKHERJEA.

9. Labour Constituencies

(i) Trade Union Labour

241. MR. J. N. GUPTA
 242. MR. AFTAB ALI
 243. DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE

(ii) Factory and Colliery Labour

244. MR. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR
 245. MR. SINATH BANERJEE
 246. MR. A. M. A. ZAMAN
 247. MR. B. MUKHERJEE

(iii) Tea Garden Labour

248. BABU LITTA MUNDA SIRDAR

10. University Constituencies

249. DR. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE
 250. MR. FAZLUR RAHMAN

Advocate-General

- SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY

Proceedings of the Assembly

Budget Session—Calcutta—12th. February to 29th. March 1943

Mahatma Gandhi's 21-day fast and Dr. *Syamaprasad Mookerjee's* statement on his resignation from the Bengal Cabinet, were the two subjects which figured prominently at the opening day's sitting of the Budget session of the Bengal Legislative Assembly held in the Assembly Hall, Calcutta on the 12th. February, 1943. The Assembly, by unanimous Indian votes—the European group opposing—urged immediate and unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi. The discussion on this special motion took place in remarkable silence prevailing in the House and was over in quarter of an hour's time.

DR. MUKHERJEE'S STATEMENT ON HIS RESIGNATION

Dr. *Syamaprasad Mookerjee* spoke for over three-quarters of an hour detailing events leading to his resignation from the Cabinet. His speech received tremendous applause from all sections of the House save the European group, and Dr. Mookerjee was greeted with shouts of "Bande Mataram" as he resumed his seat. Mr. *Abdur Rahman Siddiqui* and a few other leading members of the Muslim League Party in opposition congratulated Dr. Mookerjee on his speech when the House rose for a short recess. Said Dr. Mookerjee :—

As members of the House are aware, I felt compelled to resign first because I found that the continued policy of the British Government and the Government in this country was to ignore the claims of Indians to fuller political power, to hamper good Government consistent with the true interests of the people.

PRESENT INDIAN DEADLOCK

Suffice it to say that I definitely regard the authorities as responsible for the present deadlock in India. The Indian public on the whole can possibly have no sympathy with any foreign aggressor. The reason is simple and straightforward. We do not want a change of masters. We would like to see our country attain as speedily as possible that political status which is its birthright. There is no sense in our asking to be rid of British control, if we simultaneously wish to place

ourselves under a fresh foreign yoke. The deadlock however suits the reactionary elements that dominate over the Indian administration and it is manifest that the British Government has no desire to part with power in India. Excuse after excuse is trotted out for holding India under its heels against the will of her people.

During my experience as a Minister I found to my utter surprise that in many vital matters affecting the rights and liberty of the people the advice tendered by the ministers was invariably subject to revision in the light of the counsel tendered by the more trusted members of the services whose omniscience was almost of a divine character. Let me make it clear beyond dispute that I do not charge public servants as a class with having failed to respect the spirit of provincial autonomy in this province. I know of officers, British and Indian, whose services have been of inestimable value to the province. My charge is directed against a coterie of officials forming the Fourth Estate or the Real Estate who to-day exercise a malign influence over the affairs of the province, and according to the language of the Defence of India Rules are dangerous men. I cannot possibly discuss all the details of the provincial administration in respect of which the farcical state of a Government within a Government has been the main characteristic. But such matters related not only to the department of Law and Order but also to other departments. The keynote of the policy of interference was that people of the land were not to be trusted and power, whenever possible, must remain in the hands of chosen British officials enjoying the confidence of the Governor and his coterie.

RELEASE OF POLITICALS

In the matter of release of political prisoners the Ministers were anxious to pursue a policy which while fully consistent with the present war emergency would at the same time help to mobilise public opinion of all shades in favour of the defence of the province against Axis aggression. Whether the recommendations affected the general state policy or individual cases, systematic obstruction came from the permanent officials, whom ministers could not remove. The revised scheme of Home Guards approved by the Council of Ministers calculated to lay the foundation of a people's army, irrespective of caste, community or politics was summarily rejected by the Governor inasmuch as the stalwarts of the department of law and order were not prepared to trust Bengalees to unite in the defence of their own motherland or in maintaining internal security. The present situation regarding food and supply of essential commodities has taken an acute turn. But here also the interfering hands of the Governor and the policy of his own selected officials whom the ministry was bound to accept, whether it liked them or not, have been mainly responsible for the lack of co-ordination and for the failure to draw up a comprehensive scheme for the relief of the people at large.

When the political disturbances due to the Congress decision in August had not broken out, the policy of combating the movement was outlined by the Government of India and such is the nature of responsible Government functioning in this unfortunate land that the communication was not allowed to be placed before the Council of Ministers inspite of repeated demands made by the Chief Minister himself. A coterie of public servants could however see this document and they were ready with plans and proposals. But Ministers were allowed access to it only after the policy had been given effect to by the Government of India on August 9 last. In the matter of appointments an Indian Civil Servant who was a Bengali, could easily be superseded by the decision of the Governor in spite of ministerial advice, on the plea that all appointments and transfers were to be made by the Governor acting in his own discretion under the Government of India Act. One may stop here and ask, is that discretion intended to be exercised only in favour of protecting the vested interests of choosen officers or the interest of members belonging to the Governor's own community? Another British Civil Servant had the audacity to put down in writing that the rates of payments made to the unfortunate evacuees of Eastern Bengal were much higher than what they deserved and as "an Imperial officer"—the words are not mine but his—(and who will dare say after this that Imperialism will ever die on the soil of India?)—as an Imperial officer he refused to carry out the orders of the provincial Government. This officer still remains in power and enjoys position of trust and responsibility.

COLLECTIVE FINES

The history of imposition of collective fines is another chapter of deliberate violation of justice and fairplay. The Hindus were singled out for mass punishment in respect of collective fines. I never suggested for a moment that the remedy was

the inclusion of Moslems as a whole. My claim has been and is today that fines should be imposed only on persons who can be held to be guilty according to the provisions of the Ordinance. There should no imposition based on communal consideration. Just as innocent Moslems should be excluded, so also innocent Hindus should be excluded, unless the policy of Government is to terrorise the Hindus as a community. We as Ministers asked for the whole policy being reconsidered by the Cabinet and demanded a correct application of the Ordinance in suitable cases.

The House will recall that in course of a recent discussion the Indian members of the legislature belonging to all groups pressed Government for liberalising the conditions for admission to the Army and for taking steps for organising a national militia which would be charged with the solemn duty of defending our hearth and home. The ministry unanimously advocated the creation of such a militia but there was systematic obstruction from higher quarters. Want of arms and ammunitions, want of trainer, want of time were some of the pleas that were put forward time after time. We were reminded that the task of armed defence might be left in the hands of non-Bengalees and we in our turn could well prepare the minds of the people for putting forward an effective passive resistance should the enemy ever penetrate into our land. The real reason was not a sudden affection for the doctrine of non-violence discovered by British representatives in this province, for England would not rightly agree to follow it in her own case. It was deep-rooted distrust of Bengalees, be they Hindus or Moslems, that justified a deliberate policy of emasculation of the manhood of this land.

The Denial Policy and the schemes for compulsory evacuation for military purposes have caused the greatest possible hardship to thousands of poor people in Bengal. The Council of Ministers prepared a unanimous vote indicating with sufficient clearness that the Denial Policy which was the outcome of a theory of defeatism could easily be avoided consistent with military requirements. That memorandum was not even forwarded to the Government of India and the advice of the ministers though it ultimately secured some alteration in the detailed application of the policy, could not undo the total mischief which has caused an unprecedented social and economic disaster in many parts of Bengal.

APPEAL FOR UNITY

When we come here as members of the legislature, we seek to reach the goal of our national freedom through the path of constitutional struggle. The history of countries, which still form part of the British Empire but had to wring from unwilling hands the charter of their liberty, affords glorious examples of constitutional struggle and victory. One had to read the histories of Canada and Australia for the purpose of recalling how sharp was the difference between local power and constitutional rights in these Dominions and many a Governor was actually recalled at the instance of the legislature for their flagrant acts of arbitrary dictatorship. The Government of India Act of 1935 will not indicate the manner and method of fighting for our constitutional rights. The legislatures of India will have to create new usages and conventions and demand the abrogation of arbitrary rule. After all, what is it that we want in this province and country of ours? We have as much right to throw off the yoke of British domination as England is anxious to save herself from Hitler's profane hands. Are we to be guilty of treason or branded as fifth-columnists if we re-echo President Roosevelt's historic utterance that it is much better for a nation to die standing on its feet than to live on its bended knees? We claim the liberty to shape the administrative policy of this province with the real needs of the people. We want that the will of the people will be reflected truly and forcibly in the voices of the members of the legislature and unmindful of all consequences, its members will compel the executive to proceed on lines which are in accordance with national interests. If in the process of so doing the legislature finds disturbers and obstructionists seated on high pedestals standing in the way, it must fearlessly demand their removal from office. Let me make this appeal to all section of this House so that we may unite in our own struggle to uproot tyranny and oppression we have often fought with each other and thereby not only weakened ourselves but have strengthened those reactionary forces whose very continuance depends on our difference. To-day in the crisis that threatens us, not as Hindus or Moslems as such but as Bengalees and Indians, let us demand the inauguration of an administration which will recognise our just economic and political rights. A Hindu and a Moslem may differ on many things. But do they not equally detest slavery,—and it is for ending the state of intolerable slavery that I am asking for your support and co-operation.

RELEASE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The Assembly next passed *Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee's* special motion urging the Government of Bengal immediately to take necessary steps to represent to the Government of India that in view of the fast undertaken by Mahatma Gandhi in the present stage of his health, he should be unconditionally released forthwith. The motion was supported by all non-official members of the House excepting the European Group.

Moving the motion, *Dr. Mookerjee* pointed out that the motion was not to raise any controversial political issue. "The life of one of the greatest men of the age," he said, "is to-day at stake. That life is considered valuable and sacred by millions of men irrespective of caste, religion and politics and that life to-day should be saved from impending peril by his immediate release. Bengal wants to add her voice to the demand raised by the rest of India that Mahatma Gandhi should forthwith be released from detention and his fast brought to an immediate end."

Speaking on behalf of the Government, the Chief Minister, *Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq* said that Government as such had nothing to say in the matter. What he proposed to do was to forward the proceedings of the House in regard to the Central Government for their consideration. Speaking as an individual, *Mr. Huq* said that he shared the feelings expressed by different sections of the House. He pointed out, if the Central Government took action in a particular direction, it was not open to the Provincial Government to interfere in that action. The Provincial Government as such therefore could not offer any advice to the Central Government in matters of police or in regard to any action that might be taken by the latter.

Supporting the motion on behalf of the Muslim League Party in opposition, *Sir Nazimuddin* made it clear that they did not support the political stand taken by *Mr. Gandhi* and his followers. Out of deference, however, to the reverence with which *Mr. Gandhi* was held by a large section of their Hindu brethren, they associated themselves with the motion moved in the House. *Mr. K. S. Roy*, Leader of the Official Congress Party, the hon. *Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu*, Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, and the hon. *Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed*, Leader of the Krishak Proja Party, supported the motion. Opposing the motion on behalf of the European group, their leader, *Mr. David Hendry* pointed out that they greatly deplored the decision taken by *Mr. Gandhi* to enter upon a fast and they were deeply concerned of the risk which he had exposed himself to by resorting to a fast in his old age. At the same time, *Mr. Hendry* added, they felt that *Mr. Gandhi* might have accepted the offer of the Government of India for his release for the period of his fast. He regretted, therefore, that they had to oppose the motion. The motion was passed. The House then adjourned till the 15th.

THE MIDNAPORE INCIDENTS

15th. FEBRUARY:—An adjournment motion moved to-day on behalf of the Congress Parliamentary Party (official) to discuss the situation in Tamluk and Contai sub-divisions in Midnapore district, was talked out after a full dress debate for two hours. The adjournment motion ran as follows:

"This Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the repressions carried out in the Tamluk and Contai sub-divisions of Midnapore district, including the arrest of innocent persons, destruction of property, burning of houses and assaults on men and women".

The adjournment motion was moved by *Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal* and supported among others by *Mr. Narendra Narayan Chakravarti*, a supporter of the Government. Others who participated in the discussion included *Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee*, ex-Finance Minister and *Sir Nazimuddin*, Leader of the Muslim League Opposition. Some of the speakers narrated the alleged excesses in Midnapore district. *Dr. Mukherjee* demanded an open and independent judicial enquiry into the reported instances in Midnapore.

Sir Nazimuddin, in the course of his speech, said that if the Ministry thought that excesses were committed in Midnapore then the House and every one would demand an enquiry into the allegations made. It was for the Chief Minister either to defend the officers of the Government or to appoint a committee of enquiry. He hoped that the Ministry would make its position clear in regard to the matter. Replying to the debate, the Chief Minister, *Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq*, announced the Government decision to hold an independent and impartial enquiry into the allegations of excesses in Midnapore. He added that persons of the eminence

of High Court Judges would be appointed to hold this enquiry. Mr. Huq, who is in charge of the Home portfolio, gave a brief review of the state of affairs prevailing in Midnapore. The Government, he said, had in their possession abundant evidence to show that for some time previous to the adoption of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee on August 8 last there was something like a network of parallel administration set up in the district of Midnapore.

Dr. N. Sanyal (Congress) : We challenge you to prove that.

Mr. Huq : If a proper enquiry is made, these things will come out.

Continuing, Mr. Huq said that the people who had set up the parallel administration had their district magistrates, sub-divisional officers, the police, C. I. D. etc. "When Dr. Sanyal challenges me," Mr. Huq pointed out, "let me remind him that after August 8. when lawlessness broke out in Midnapore, these 'police officers of the Congress actually 'arrested' persons whom they put in jails which were called 'Gandhi jail.' There is also evidence that many of these persons who called themselves volunteers and the 'police' force of the Congress, actually committed acts of violence on persons who resisted these acts of lawlessness." Proceeding, Mr. Huq said that the movement broke out with such intensity in Midnapore that the local officers had in many instances to call in the aid of the military. The Government got reports that post offices and police stations were burnt, people were kept confined, 10 or 25 people were kidnapped and some of them were kept confined and of some, no trace yet had been found. When these things were going on, it was true that strong measures were taken by local officers. Even now the Government were receiving from various parts of the district reports that lawlessness was far from being at an end there. In placing before the House this version of the incident received from local officers, the Chief Minister said that of the charge made on the floor of the House, many had been repudiated by local officers. On the one hand it was his duty as Home Minister to place before the House and the public an official version ; but he also did feel impressed by the narration of events made by representatives of the people as regards the alleged excesses committed by or under the direction of some of the local officers. He had been particularly distressed to hear of the ghastly tales of rape and repression occurring after the cyclone. Justice demanded, and in fact, the very interest of the officers concerned demanded that there should be an impartial enquiry regarding the affairs relating to Midnapore.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee said that within the time at his disposal it was impossible to give a true picture of Midnapore. He would only give as briefly as possible, a picture of Midnapore before and after the cyclone.

The House would recall that before the "Civil Disobedience" started the denial policy was enforced by Government in many parts of Bengal. So far as Midnapore was concerned, the policy of removal of boats and other conveyances, especially bicycles, went on unabated. Nearly 10 thousand bicycles were taken away from the district, a large number of boats were ordered to be surrendered at a very short notice and a few hundreds were destroyed, because people failed to surrender them in time. How these acts should arouse strong feelings in the minds of the local inhabitants could be comprehended.

Continuing Dr. Mookerjee said that then came the Civil Disobedience Movement. Dr. Mookerjee would not go into details how that movement went on. He would accept for his present purpose the statement made by the authorities that the movement took a serious turn, and there was a deliberate challenge thrown out to Government. He also assumed that the situation took a bad turn. But the fact remained that men who were carrying on these 'subversive' activities were doing them non-violently. When the Chief Minister would make his statement, Dr. Mookerjee could dare say that the Chief Minister would say that there was not a single allegation of violence used by the workers until the situation worsened by the 'extraordinary' repressive policy of Government went on. Arrests went on ; burning of houses and looting went on. This was how the district fared.

"Now, under what authority the burning of people's houses was being carried on, I do not know. I do not know if the Chief Minister will be able to say under whose orders these acts of violence were committed. Dr. Mookerjee said that it might be assumed that before the 16th of October the movement had assumed an extraordinary character. Any legitimate steps taken by the local officers for curtailing the activities of the workers or for re-establishment of law must be supported by any Government. "But Government officers overstepped this and carried on", Dr. Mookerjee alleged, "a deliberate policy of destruction".

SUPPRESSION OF NEWS

Continuing he said that the cyclone came. And the first charge he would level against Government was the suppression of news until the Minister had visited the district. He hoped that the Chief Minister would deal with this question. The communique was issued, Dr. Mookerjee said, only after the return of the Ministers on the 4th November. Not one single item of news was allowed to be published. News was published about certain other parts of Bengal, about Noakhali, Faridpur etc., and that a severe cyclone had passed through certain areas of Bengal.

When a Bengali daily merely asked about happenings in Midnapore, there went a warning from the Secretariat that it must not refer in any way to the happening in that district.

Nobody knew anything about the extent of disaster in Midnapore. Did the Chief Minister who is also the Home Minister know? Not a single Minister knew anything about it. When the Ministers demanded an answer from the Home Department, the reply was "military consideration prevent the circulation of the news." The Defence of India Rules prohibited the circulation of news which give information to the enemy about the weather of any particular area, and that no news should be circulated which would disclose information to the enemy about the breakdown of communications. It was news of this description the circulation of which had been prohibited by the Government of India. In fact, the Ministers reminded some of the officers that they were not giving information to the enemy, but the Japanese were broadcasting that a lakh of Bengalees were killed by the cyclone. "This", Dr. Mookerjee declared, "was a criminal neglect on the part of the Home Department". In fact, the Government communique was issued when the Chief Minister and other Ministers stated, after their visit to Midnapore, that they would issue communique on their own responsibilities.

SITUATION BUNGLED

The report came from the district officer, Dr. Mookerjee continued, minimising the gravity of the situation. Did that report, asked the speaker, suggest that relief should be withheld for the purpose of teaching the people a permanent lesson? (Cries of Shame, shame). The district officer reported that not a single person came forward to receive relief. But shortly report came that thousands of persons were coming to receive doles. The whole situation was bungled. There was practically one man; there was no organised relief. The Revenue Department tried to do certain things but on account of the obstructive attitude taken up by the Home Department it could do little. There was, Dr. Mookerjee said, relief by day and raid at night. Dr. Mookerjee challenged Government to produce reports of some responsible officers of the district which, he said, would bear out his allegations (Shame, shame). Government said that they wanted peace. All the Ministers tried to release political prisoners of Midnapore who gave undertaking that the political movement would cease. The prisoners pleaded for seven days' release. But that was not given. Some of the Ministers found themselves helpless in the matter. This was the true picture of Midnapore. "We demand an enquiry. There must be an open independent judicial inquiry. We know the Chief Minister feels in his heart the necessity of this inquiry. Let him say what prevents him from doing so. He must take the House and the public in the fullest confidence and tell us who are preventing the Chief Minister from accepting our request and setting up an inquiry."

BUDGET FOR 1943-44

16th. FEBRUARY:—The Bengal Government's budget for 1943-44 presented to-day disclosed a deficit on revenue account of one crore and 53 lakhs.

Presenting it in the Assembly, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, the Chief Minister and Minister for Finance announced the Government decision to raise additional revenue during the coming year by enhancing the rates of some of the existing duties. The estimated yield of the enhanced taxation will be about Rs. 33 lakhs.

THE FINANCE BILL 1943

After presenting the budget, Mr. Fazlul Huq introduced the Bengal Finance Bill 1943, which sought to raise additional revenue to the extent of Rs. 33,00,000 by enhancement for a maximum period of two years of the rates of the following taxes: Entertainments Tax, Totalisator Tax and Betting Tax under the Bengal Amusements Tax Act, 1922, and Electricity Duty under the Bengal Electricity Duty Act, 1935.

The proposed enhancement in taxation nearly doubles the existing rates of Entertainment Tax payable for admission to cinema houses, increases both the Totalisator Tax and Betting Tax from four per cent to ten per cent and enhances the existing rates of Electricity Duty in respect of supply of energy for lights and fans.

DEBATE ON FOOD SUPPLY

17th. FEBRUARY :—The debate on food, coal, kerosene oil and cloth situation in the province was initiated on behalf of Government by *Prince Yusuf Mirza*, Chief Whip of the Government Party, The Congress Party outlined a scheme for effectively dealing with the situation. In doing so, its spokesman, Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal* said that Government's complete failure to tackle the problems was due to the lack of a policy. Government, Dr. Sanyal said, had not considered the situation on an all-Bengal basis, but were concerned for maintaining supplies for the industrial and other workers engaged in war works. Mr. *Tamizuddin Khan*, on behalf of the Muslim League party in opposition, also made several suggestions to improve the situation, at the same time strongly criticising Government for its "failure". *Prince Yusuf Mirza*, Chief Whip of the Ministerialist party, moved that the situation in the province relating to the supplies and distribution of food-stuffs, coal, kerosene oil and cloth be taken into consideration. *Prince Mirza* said that the problem was not merely a provincial one but a complicated one linked with the whole of India. He hoped that the combined wisdom of the House would help Government greatly in meeting the situation.

18th. FEBRUARY :—Mr. *David Hendry*, leader of the European group, said that the debate had been left a good deal in the air in the absence of an opening statement from the Minister-in-charge setting out the real food situation in the province and what he was doing to cope with it. While it must be admitted that for imported commodities, acute shortage and abnormal prices had been largely due to factors beyond the control of the Bengal Government, but so far as the essential commodity, rice, was concerned, the responsibility for controlling the situation rested entirely with the provincial Government. In normal years, Mr. Hendry said, there was only a small margin between imports from Burma and exports from Bengal, and the province was really self-sufficient. Last year Bengal's rice crop was a good one; this year it was not so good, but with the carry-over from last year the possible shortage could only be very small. "Exports and military consumption", according to Mr. Hendry, "can only amount to an extremely small percentage of the total available supplies, and shortage, if any, cannot account for the fantastic prices which have prevailed for rice in Calcutta and the mofussil areas since November last." *Maharaja Sris Chander Nandy* of Cassimbazar said that there was a good deal of public anxiety at the way in which food situation was being handled by Government for the past one year. Government failed to take into consideration the fact that the control of price could not succeed without control of supply. The speaker spoke in favour of creating a Food Department under a Minister responsible to the legislature. The Maharaja regretted that while Government had not made any effective attempts to meet the deficit of rice supply arising out of the occupation of Burma and Siam by Japanese up till now, they should have allowed exports of rice to Ceylon and other countries. Mr. *D. N. Sen* (Bengal National Chamber of Commerce) said that the food position had become serious from the point of view of the cost of living of the working class which had moved from 100 to 218. The average price of rice had gone up by nearly 300 p. c. and 'Ata' by more than 200 p. c. The reason why the effort to impose price control had led to chaos lay primarily in the fact that Government always sought to control prices without obtaining control of the total supply of the commodity. If the Government seriously wanted to obtain control over the supply of various foodstuffs, it must have an Intelligence Bureau for compiling statistics of food production in various districts. Once it is done the Government would be able to formulate their policies on the ascertained date. The available data showed that Bengal was a deficit in respect of food supply. The imperative need, therefore, was to increase the food supply at once. The grow more food campaign which had been successful in Madras failed in Bengal on account of the action taken by the Government in encouraging increased acreage of jute area. The Government should also stop all exports of rice from Bengal unless they knew the stocks available in Bengal. The Government must also effect better co-ordination through a central organisation in order to obviate sudden fluctuations in demand. The Government must also

combat the psychological tendency of hoarding rice by law and by total purchase of all available supplies accompanied by all-round rationing if necessary. If an examination of the statistical positions revealed a shortage in foodstuffs, there could be no way out but rationing rather than to allow a few rich people to monopolise the available food supplies at the cost of general public. He concluded by warning that the outlook was very gloomy and unless the Government acted quickly and boldly they might soon experience food riots all over the province.

DETENUS IN BENGAL

19th. FEBRUARY :—Replying to a question in the Assembly to-day, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister and Minister in charge of the Home portfolio informed the House that 1,019 persons had so far been arrested and detained under Rule 129, and 1,210 persons under Rule 26 of the D. I. R. in the province. He further stated that number of persons convicted under the Defence of India Rules in the Province in connection with political and anti-war activities and the Civil Disobedience movement from August last to the end of December, 1942, was 1,559.

The Assembly discussed non-official bills to-day and adjourned.

BENGAL SECURITY PRISONERS

20th. FEBRUARY :—During question-time this morning the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq informed the House that the tribunal set up by the Government to review the cases of the security prisoners submitted their findings on August 27 last. But, in view of, he said, the widespread campaign of sabotage and violence, which followed the ratification by the All-India Congress Committee of the Congress Working Committee's resolution of August 8, 1942 and the subsequent arrests of leading Congressmen which had introduced an entirely new factor in the situation, and in the interest of public security, the Government had been compelled to postpone consideration of the recommendations of the tribunal. He added that the campaign of violence and sabotage was almost at an end and if the present improvement continued, the Government would be able to consider the matter and make an announcement as early as possible.

MINISTER'S ADVICE TO GOVERNOR

22nd. FEBRUARY :—A point of constitutional importance was raised by Dr. Nalinakhya Sanyal (Congress) to-day when he sought, on a point of order, a ruling from the Chair as to whether the House had a right to know what advice a Minister had tendered to the Governor in relation to a particular matter. The point arose out of a question put by Dr. Sanyal last week when he wanted to ascertain from the Home Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq whether Dr. Suresh Chandra Majumdar, Dr. Satyapriya Bannerjee and Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal had been detained as security prisoners under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules with his consent or not.

Speaking on the point of order raised by Dr. Sanyal, Mr. Huq said that he had tried to ascertain whether the Viceroy's declaration made in June 1937 defining the position of a Minister *vis-a-vis* a Provincial Governor had been modified in view of the circumstances consequent upon war conditions and he (Mr. Huq) had been assured that the declaration stood good. Mr. Huq said that in relation to a matter falling within the sphere of 'individual judgment' of the Governor, a Minister had the right to differ from a Governor and had also a right to tell the Legislature, if he so desired, that he gave a particular advice and that it was not accepted. But if the Minister did not desire to let the Legislature know what passed between him and the Governor, Mr. Huq did not think that the constitutional position came to this, that he (the Minister concerned) could be compelled by a series of questions to disclose the advice that he had tendered.

The Chair said that the point of order raised by Dr. Sanyal was an important constitutional question and a ruling was given by Mr. Syed Jalaluddin Hashemy, Deputy speaker, on the 24th. February expressing that "it is absolutely within the discretion of the Minister to take the House into confidence". The Deputy Speaker said that the whole question hinges on the point whether the Speaker had got the power to compel a Minister to disclose to the House as to what advice he had tendered to the Governor in a case where the Minister's advice was not mandatory upon him. He, however, stated that the message of Lord Linlithgow, dated the 21st June, 1937, in defining the position of the Ministers *vis-a-vis* the Governor, clearly laid down that the Ministers were entitled, if they so desired, publicly to state their responsibility for any particular decision or even the advice they tendered in a particular case to the Governor. "So in this particular case", he

said, "Mr. Fazlul Huq will be within his right if he discloses to this House what advice he had given to the Governor".

NO TRUTH IN ENEMY RADIO REPORTS

23rd. FEBRUARY :—Questions regarding the truth or otherwise of certain assertions made recently by enemy radio stations, particularly German and Japanese, were asked in the Assembly to-day.

Replying the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq pointed out that the reports alleged to have been broadcast by the Berlin Radio that British armed police opened fire on February 1 and 2, upon students of the Dacca University singing "Bande Mataram" and injured a number of them was without any foundation. The only foundation for such a report apparently was, said the Chief Minister, the objection that was taken by some students to the singing of the song by others and the scuffle which followed among the two groups of students.

As regards the broadcast from Saigon, dated February 5-6, alleging that a demonstration of nationalists in front of the Chief Minister's residence had been dispersed by a police lathi charge, the Chief Minister said that the story was also completely without foundation. He added that these reports were so palpably wrong that he did not consider it necessary to give further publicity to the actual facts. "The enemy broadcasts about conditions in India are absurd and carry their own condemnation", pointed out Mr. Huq. "The people of the province are intelligent enough not to attach any credence to them. No other action is necessary."

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

25th. FEBRUARY :—The announcement of a definite policy from Government to deal with the food, fuel and cloth situation in the province was demanded by speakers participating at the resumed debate on the Government motion in this regard to-day. Members participating in the discussion dwelt mainly on the food situation, and the suggestion of the Congress Party for a Central Food Committee composed of Government, non-official and trade representatives to guide and advise Government in the execution of its policy, was supported by majority of them. "Quick decision" on the part of Government was urged by Mr. Syed Abdul Majid (Muslim League), while stressing the immediate need for introducing rationing of rice in view of the acute shortage of the crop. Mr. Abdul Hafiz (Moslem League) asked Government to stop export of rice from the province, and to take steps to ensure adequate transport facilities. Mr. Atul Sen (Progressive Coalition) demanded a more vigorous "grow more food" campaign among the peasants. He complained that Government propaganda in this regard had up till now been done mostly through newspapers which did not reach the peasantry. Large tracts of land were still left uncultivated, and such land should be given to the peasants for cultivation without rent. Mr. P. Banerjee (Congress) gave his unqualified support to the amendment of his party moved by Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal. The scheme contained in that amendment, in his opinion, would ensure a fair measure of 'success'. Mr. J. N. Gupta (Labour) drew a 'pathetic' picture of the distress among the labour and poor sections of the population at the scarcity of cloth at cheap rates. Government's promise to supply standard cloth had remained unfulfilled and strong indications were not yet available to its realisation in the near future. Moulana Abdul Aziz (Moslem League) referred to the 'extreme' difficulty of obtaining kerosene oil in mofussil districts. Many houses were going without light. In black market, however, the speaker alleged, abundant quantity of oil was available at inordinately high price. He criticised Government for having failed to check corruption and black market, and pleaded for effective control. Mr. Anandilal Poddar (Nationalist) deplored that the food situation had been aggravated by Government creating panic by ill-conceived measures. He also criticised Government for altering their original decision of reducing jute acreage by one-third and making it one-half at the instance of interested trade. Mr. Poddar doubted if rationing would be a success with the existing "incompetent" machinery. Dr. Sanaullah (Progressive Coalition) and Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan (Progressive Coalition) also spoke. The House then adjourned.

SMALL COINS

Replying to a question put by Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali, the Hon. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq stated that he was aware of the great hardship and distress that was being caused to the people of Bengal due to an acute shortage of coins of small denominations. Currency, coinage and

legal tenders were central subjects and the Government of India were taking steps to increase the supply of small coins. This Government have directed that prosecutions shall be instituted wherever hoarding is detected and have announced that rewards will be paid to persons furnishing information leading to conviction. Prosecuting officers have been instructed to press for deterrent sentences on conviction.

Replying to supplementary questions by Mr. *Anandi Lal Poddar* and Khan Bahadur *Mohammed Ali*, Mr. *Huq* confessed that he did not know what amount of coins constituted hoarding in the law court nor could he give any assurance that no prosecution should take place so long as an explanation on that point was forthcoming. He, however, thought that hoarding punishable in a court of law could be defined according to individual cases.

NUMBER OF DETENUS

Replying to a question by Mr. *Nagendra Nath Sen*, Hon. Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* stated that the latest figures (end of January 1943) of detenus detained in goal under the Defence of India Rule 26 or Defence of India Rule 129 are (1) Special security prisoners—2,355 ; (2) others—1,643 ; Restrained under Defence of India Rule 26—(1) Criminals—1,464 and (2) others 1,698.

MINISTERS NOT FREE AGENTS—MR. HUQ'S STATEMENT

27th. FEBRUARY:—A statement on his position as a Minister under the present condition was made by Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq*, Chief Minister and Minister-in-charge of the Home Department in the Assembly this morning. Mr. *Huq* said: "I have to work under considerable limitations. It must be understood that provincial autonomy does not mean that I can do whatever I like. In many cases, I have got to do things contrary to what I would have done if I were a free agent. In these cases, there are moments when I do feel that the best course for me would be to walk out, and if that moment does arise, I shall not be slow to adopt that course, because I am fed up with the position which gives me very little opportunity of conceding to what I know is public opinion, in view of the overriding consequences which have been imposed upon me as a result of the war."

These observations were made by the Chief Minister, while speaking on a cut motion by Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal* (Official Congress) to raise a discussion on the 'grievances' of persons arrested under the Defence Rules in connection with the Bengal Government's Supplementary Budget demand under "Jails and Convict Settlements" for the current year.

Earlier in his speeches, Mr. *Huq* referred to the criticism that the Ministry had not been able to do anything to meet the public demand that the lot of security prisoners should be improved or that the grievances of the public regarding arrests and detention might be removed as far as possible.

Asking the House to judge the constitutional position, Mr. *Huq* said that under section 49 of the Government of India Act, Executive Government had to be carried on by his Excellency the Governor with the help of subordinate officers. In this connection, he referred to the judgment of a special bench of the Calcutta High Court which definitely held that ministers were not subordinate officers in the sense in which that expression was used in that Section and that they were merely to give advice. The position, therefore, was that "His Excellency the Governor on one side and the departmental officers on the other who carried out the wishes of His Excellency in respect of the Executive Government have got the Ministers sandwiched between them and the utmost that the Ministers could do was only to offer advice."

As regards security prisoners the present was an occasion of extreme urgency in various matters because they were passing through abnormal times in consequence of the war. The Defence of India Rules had given powers which government did not previously enjoy, and the Government of India Act plus the Defence of India Rules had given to the Governor and the executive authority powers which they did not have in normal times. If in these circumstances the military authorities or the police or any other department gave advice that the detention in custody of a particular person was essential for the preservation of peace and order, Mr. *Huq* said, in the last resort, the judgment of His Excellency must prevail. There had been cases in which Mr. *Huq* thought that neither the arrest nor the detention was justified and he had tendered that advice to His Excellency but His Excellency, in exercise of his individual judgment, had thought it fit to override his advice.

In conclusion, Mr. Huq pointed out that within the limitation of the powers given to them under the Government of India Act, further restricted by the Defence of India Rules they had done something in regard to meeting public opinion in the matter of alleged grievances of security prisoners to which they could point as an honest attempt to meet public opinion in this matter.

The cut motion was withdrawn and the demand was passed.

CASUALTIES IN AUGUST DISTURBANCES

The disturbances that had occurred in August last following the Arrest of Congress leaders were recalled in reply to a question to-day.

Replying, the *Chief Minister* said that 20 persons were killed and 152 persons injured as a result of police actions during the period of disturbances in August last. Asked whether the action taken by the police in this connection had been approved by the Council of Ministers or the Home Minister, Mr. Huq said that the action was taken by the police in the restoration of law and order necessitated by "riotous and subversive" demonstrations accompanied by "sabotage" on "an alarming scale." The police had taken that action in the exercise of powers conferred upon them by the law for the exercise of which they were not required to obtain any further sanction or approval from Government.

In Calcutta, 30 persons were killed and 568 persons injured, by military lorries in 1941-43, according to a statement made by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, in reply to another question.

Replying to another supplementary question, Mr. Huq said that Government had approached the military authorities and he was glad to say that the military authorities had not only promised to see that these accidents were minimised but they had also taken strong measures in those cases in which action could be taken.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

1st. MARCH :—Mr. Syed Nausher Ali, ex-Minister, was elected Speaker of the Assembly this evening. The voting was as follows : Mr. Syed Nausher Ali (Progressive Coalition Party) 118 votes ; Mr. A. R. Siddiqui (Muslim League) 95 ; Mr. Nishit Nath Kundu (Progressive Coalition—now a Security prisoner) nil. The vacancy was caused by the resignation of Sir Aziz-ul Huq, on his being appointed High Commissioner for India in London.

DEATHS IN MIDNAPORE CYCLONE DISASTER

Replying to a question, Mr. P. N. Banerjee, Revenue Minister, gave the official figures of the number of casualties resulting from the cyclone and flood in Midnapore District in October last. The actual number of persons killed was about 15,000 while the cattle casualties numbered 60,000.

THE VAGRANCY BILL

2nd. MARCH :—Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Minister for Public Health and Local Self-Government introduced the Bengal Vagrancy Bill to-day whereby the Government propose to take powers to collect all genuine vagrants and place them in homes established by the Government. The Bill, when passed, will come into force in the first instance in Calcutta.

CONVICTIONS OF AUGUST DISTURBANCES

Six hundred-and-thirty-nine persons have been convicted in the Province up to January 28 of offences connected with the movement that had started following the arrest of members of the Congress Working Committee, according to a statement made by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, in reply to a question.

The number of prisoners detained up to that period without trial is as follows: Security Prisoners for political reasons: 1,643; prisoners not yet confirmed as security prisoners: 142; and other detenus—2,355. The number of persons whose movements have been restricted for political reasons up to January 26 is 3,052.—

SPECIAL JUDGES ORDINANCE

3rd. MARCH :—An adjournment motion to discuss the alleged misapplication of Ordinance Number 11 of 1942, promulgated by the Central Government, by appointing special magistrates in cases not contemplated in the Ordinance, was talked out in the Assembly to-day. The motion was sponsored by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy (Muslim League Opposition). The point of view of the mover and his supporters was that, if the Provincial Government was

satisfied on the existence of an emergency arising from hostile attack on India or from the imminence of such an attack, it was expected to declare the Ordinance to be in force in the Province. It surely was not meant to apply to breaches or disturbances of the peace or to ordinary dacoity or thefts or even to cases of ordinary sedition or to ordinary political disaffection.

Replying to the debate the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, said that the question of emergency was beyond dispute, but as regards misapplication of the provisions of the Ordinance, he assured that the Government would reconsider each case that had been mentioned or might be mentioned later on merits and if they found that the Ordinance had been misapplied, they would set aside the convictions and set the men concerned at liberty. Replying to the point raised by Sir Nazimuddin that before a case went to the special magistrates for trial under the Ordinance, it should receive the approval of the Provincial Government, Mr. Huq promised to consult legal opinion and to see that the suggestion was accepted as far as possible.

In the course of the discussion, some members cried "shame" in relation to certain alleged misapplication of the Ordinance, when the Speaker, Mr. Nausher Ali, intervened and said that the word was unparliamentary and directed that it should not be used in the House in future.

BENGAL FINANCE BILL 1943

At the afternoon session of the Assembly, the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, (who is also Minister-in-charge of Finance) moved that the Bengal Finance Bill, 1943, be taken into consideration. The Bill nearly doubles the present rates of amusement tax on cinema-goers and the electricity duty and raises the betting and totalisator taxes from four per cent to ten per cent. The proposed enhanced taxation would be emergency taxation for two years only in the first instance. The Opposition moved an amendment urging the circulation of the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon by March 15, 1943. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, ex-Finance Minister, (Muslim League) supported the motion for circulation. Sir Nazimuddin, leader of the Muslim League, thought that the whole scheme of taxation in the Bill was wrong. Speaking on behalf of the European Group, Mr. D. R. Gladding said that they approved of the extra taxation as a purely temporary war measure. The debate on the motion had not concluded when the House adjourned till March 5.

CASUALTIES IN AUGUST DISTURBANCES

5th. MARCH:—Detailed information about the number of persons killed as a result of police firing in Calcutta proper and in some other parts of the Province, since the movement started in August last, was given by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, during question hour to-day.

The figures of those killed are as follows: Calcutta proper—20 including one woman; Dinajpur District—4; Contai sub-division (Midnapore district)—13; and Tamluk sub-division (Midnapore District)—32 including a woman.

Thirty-six non-officials and thirteen Government servants were kidnapped by "rebel elements" in the Midnapore District from the commencement of disturbances to date, according to a reply given by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, to a question by the Leader of the European Group, Mr. David Hendry. Two persons, added the Chief Minister, were killed, this latter figure excluding eight persons who were kidnapped and still untraced and believed to have been murdered.

Giving further details, the Chief Minister said that there were 55 cases of intimidation and extortion by "rebel elements" in the area during the period. Thirty persons were assaulted or intimidated by them on grounds that they were supporting the Government forces. Twenty-nine Government buildings and houses and three officers' quarters and two thanas were burnt as well as 21 private buildings and a bazaar. Other Government property burnt included the records of eleven post offices and three thanas. Under the head "private property", a kerosene oil tank, school furniture and records, a motor bus, two boats full of kerosene oil, boats loaded with essential commodities and three wooden bridges were also burnt.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

The question of imposing collective fines in the province was discussed on a non-official resolution. The resolution, which was moved by Rai Harendranath Chowdhury (Progressive Coalition), expresses the opinion that collective fines should not be imposed on those areas where offenders have not been or could not be

traced and where it has not been possible to establish by evidence that the inhabitants in general have been harbouring the alleged offenders. The discussion on the resolution had not concluded when the House adjourned till March 8.

THE BENGAL FINANCE BILL 1943

8th. MARCH :—In the Assembly to-day, the Bengal Finance Bill 1943 introduced by the *Finance Minister* was referred, on a Government motion, to a Select Committee with instructions to submit their report by March 16. The Opposition amendments urging circulation of the Bill for eliciting public opinion thereon were negatived without a division. The Chief Minister stated, in reply to an interpellation, that the Government were aware of the fact that some residents of this Province had been detained in enemy-occupied territory, such as Burma and Malaya and, that in many cases, their family members were in great distress. The Bengal Government, he added, are granting repayable advances to the dependents of these persons for their maintenance under the authority delegated to the Provincial Governments by the Government of India. All District Officers had been given necessary instructions and authority to deal with such cases. The House then adjourned till the 10th.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

10th. MARCH :—An exciting three-day debate on the food situation in the province concluded in the Assembly to-night when the House rejected by 92 to 78 votes, the Muslim League opposition's amendment which sought to censure the Government for its alleged failure to tackle satisfactorily the food situation in the province. The European group voted with the League Opposition while the Opposition amendment was opposed by the Government party. The official Congress party remained neutral. Two independent Labour members and six Scheduled Caste members of the Government party did not participate in the voting. On behalf of the Government, the Chief Minister Mr. Huq assured the House that they were prepared to accept in principle the operative side of the official Congress Party's amendment, which contained certain suggestions for tackling the food situation of the province. The Congress Party's amendment was then withdrawn. The debate concluded in a tense atmosphere and the result of the voting was greeted with cries of "shame" "shame" both from Government and Opposition sides. The Speaker pointed out that the term "shame" was an unparliamentary one, and warned that it should not be used in future. In winding up the debate, the Chief Minister declared that the Government had decided that there should be a Minister for Civil Supplies assisted by a strong and representative advisory committee. He further declared that Mr. Naliniranjan Sarkar, lately Commerce Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council had agreed to be the Chairman of the Committee. On the question of supply of rice, Mr. Huq said that the Bengal Government had approached the Government of India in this connection and he was now in a position to announce the welcome news that in the very near future the province was going to have a sufficient amount of rice. He added that as to whether the future policy of the Government should be control or decontrol, the Cabinet would meet to-morrow and come to a decision.

A strong attack on the Ministry "that has proved thoroughly incapable of handling the food situation" was made by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy. The Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, Minister for Civil Supplies, gave a brief outline of how the situation developed since Burma rice ceased coming into Bengal. The scheme of the denial policy further aggravated the situation. He explained the steps taken by Government to deal with the position.

THE MIDNAPORE INCIDENTS

12th. MARCH : The words "smashed by the Congress agitators" appearing in the printed answer to a question in connection with the destruction of telegraphic, postal and other communications in Midnapore District before the cyclone in October, were deleted by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, when he read out the answer to the Assembly to-day. The Opposition wanted to know if in giving a printed answer, the Minister was entitled to add or alter the answer. The Speaker, Syed Nausher Ali said that as the answer was given according to information received by him, he thought the Minister was entitled to do so, if he so liked.

Explaining to the House why he deleted the words, Mr. Huq said : "It is true that the answer as drafted by the Department concerned was approved by me. After that was done, there was another question in the House in the course of the reply to which the words 'Congress agitators' were used and there were questions

from various sides as to what I meant by 'Congress agitators.' In order to make my position clear, I therefore got into touch with the district authorities, and asked them whether they were prepared to stand by the statement that the communications had been smashed by the Congress agitators before the cyclone. The reply I got was that the fact remained that the communications had been destroyed, but there was no positive evidence as to who had done it. I, therefore, thought that I should not give the reply in the form in which it was drafted by the Department.

ALLOWANCE TO DETENUS

Of the 756 security prisoners and detenues who had applied to the Bengal Government for the grant of family allowances, 160 had been granted such allowances, according to a statement made by the Chief Minister. The number of security prisoners and detenues who were granted family allowances exceeding Rs. 25 and Rs. 50 were 32 and 3 respectively. There was no security prisoner or detenu who had been granted an allowance exceeding Rs. 100 per month.

The Chief Minister answered in the negative an enquiry whether any amounts as family allowance had been granted to members of the Legislature who were now security prisoners.

Asked as to whether the Government contemplated granting any dearness allowance to those who received family allowances in view of the increase in the price of foodstuffs and other necessities of life, the Chief Minister said: "Some such relief measure is under the consideration of the Government."

ADJUDICATION OF LABOUR DISPUTES

13th. MARCH:—The decision of the Government of Bengal to set up a permanent Court for adjudication of labour disputes, as has been done in Bombay, was announced by the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq to-day. Mr. Huq added that Government had already taken steps for securing the services of a High Court Judge for the office of President of the proposed Court. On the question of prosecution of workers in essential services who went on strike without notice, Mr. Huq said that necessary instructions had already been issued to the district authorities for taking action in these cases. Although Government had always been anxious to secure the full amount of relief that could be given to labour under the present conditions, the Government's policy was to apply the provisions of the Defence Rules most rigorously, so that the number of strikes might be reduced.

This statement was made by the Chief Minister while speaking on a cut motion moved by Mr. W. A. M. Walker, European Group, in which the latter sought to raise a discussion on the question of full utilisation and enforcement of the provisions of the Defence Rules relating to the settlement of labour disputes. In moving the cut, Mr. Walker remarked that by not enforcing the law Government had encouraged the people when they intended to ignore the law and that labour might go on strike without notice at any time and with impunity. His grievance was that Government had not fully adopted the provision of the Defence Rules and the Essential Service Maintenance Ordinance, and in one instance Government ignored them.

In view of the Chief Minister's assurance regarding the constitution of a court to adjudicate on labour disputes, Mr. Walker withdrew his cut motion.

GOVT. DECISION ON FLOOD REPORT

15th. MARCH:—The decisions of the Government of Bengal on the Land Revenue Commission's recommendations were announced in the Assembly to-day by Mr. P. N. Banerjee, Revenue Minister. The Commission had recommended the abolition of Permanent Settlement and acquisition by the State of all rent-receiving interests with a view to bringing the cultivators directly under the Government.

Speaking on a cut motion in connection with the land revenue budget, Mr. Banerjee said that the Government accepted the policy of bringing the actual cultivators into direct relation with the Government and of securing, in the first instance, the interests of all classes of rent receivers above the lowest grade of each paying under-ryots. On the question of payment of compensation to rent-receiving interests whose interests would be acquired by the State, the Government accepted that the rates of such compensation should vary from ten to fifteen times the net profit, according to the nature and circumstances of each estate. The Government had decided that a tribunal of a judicial character should be set up for the assessment of compensation in each case and the tribunal's decision

would be final. The Government also agreed that they should undertake legislation in the matter on these lines as early as possible after going through the technical formalities enjoined under the Government of India Act. In view, however, of the financial and other risks involved the Government had decided that State acquisition should be undertaken on an experimental basis in one district, when the revisional operations now going on there were brought to a close.

GOVERNOR'S REJECTION OF PREMIER'S ADVICE

16th. MARCH :—There were interpellations to-day on the subject of "The Council of Ministers and their advice to His Excellency the Governor". Mr. *Satya Priya Banerjee*, a security prisoner now in detention, had tabled a question in which he asked if the attention of the Minister in charge of the Home Department had been drawn to a report published in the Press in October last wherein, among other things, it was stated that the Chief Minister had been reduced to the position of a non-entity, the administration to-day in Bengal was being carried on in an autocratic fashion by the Governor and officials of the permanent Services over the head and in most cases behind the back of the Ministers and his Cabinet colleagues. Mr. Banerjee further asked if it was a fact that Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, in the course of a statement published in the press in November last immediately after his resignation, observed that 'the Governor has chosen to act in many vital matters in disregard of the wishes of the Ministers and has depended on the advice of a section of prominent officials'.

Replying, the *Chief Minister* said that his attention had been drawn to this statement.

Mr. *Banerjee's* question further asked what were the instances, if any, in which the advice tendered by the Ministers had not been accepted by the Governor and what steps if any the Council of Ministers had taken or proposed to take to meet the situation.

Mr. *Huq* replied that in the public interest he must decline to furnish the information asked for.

Further asked if the Government were considering the desirability of ascertaining public opinion in order to find out what the public demand was in this respect, Mr. *Huq* explained the position in a statement. He said that he was prepared to satisfy public curiosity so far as it was permissible under the Rules. He did not admit as correct the paraphrasing put on his statement by many newspapers. Secondly, Mr. *Huq* added, he would like to remind the members of the House that while he was making his statement he said that there were cases in which the advice had not been accepted by His Excellency the Governor acting in his own discretion. It might be in two cases, ten cases or half-a-dozen cases. He had not stated in how many cases, but he did say in some cases. That had happened throughout India, and it had happened throughout the world, wherever a similar system of administration was enforced. "I take the position that, although I submit that there have been instances in which the advice that I have tendered has not been accepted by his Excellency the Governor, I am not prepared to say in how many instances it has occurred. It may be that I decline to give that information in my own interest or in the interest of the public. I have said in my answer that I am refusing at the present moment to disclose the information in public interest. It is a matter in which I have exercised my judgment. As a responsible Minister of the Crown I have got to realise the responsibility I owe under the oath of my office and having regard to my position as a Minister of the Crown and having regard to the fact that I am bound by certain oaths which I took at the time of my acceptance of office, I have decided that in public interest it would not be wise or advisable or even permissible for me to say in how many instances my advice has not been accepted by His Excellency the Governor".

Mr. *F. Stark* (Secretary, European Group), enquired if the Chief Minister agreed with the statement issued by Dr. S. P. Mookerjee. The *Chair* pointed out that Dr. Mookerjee's statement was issued after his resignation from the Cabinet. Mr. *Stark* was asking the opinion of the Chief Minister as to whether he agreed with that statement. The *Chair* held that was a question of opinion and did not arise. Mr. *Tamizuddin Khan* (Muslim League Opposition) asked the Chief Minister to state if Dr. Mookerjee's statement was correct. Replying, Mr. *Huq* said that Dr. Mookerjee's statement contained various statements of facts. Some of them might be true, some of them might not be true and some

of them might be matters of opinion of Dr. Mookerjee on the relation between him and the Governor. Mr. Huq thought that this was a confusion of facts and he did not think that he was in a position to give any answer. Mr. *Tamizuddin Khan* asked if it was a fact that in all these cases in which the Governor did not accept the advice of the Ministers, he took the Ministers into subsequent consultations and the Ministers concerned agreed with the views of the Governor. Mr. *Huq* : I am not in a position to answer.

FIXATION OF ACREAGE FOR JUTE CULTIVATION

18th. MARCH :—Hon. Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* explained the reasons why the jute acreage for the current year had been fixed at eight annas in the course of the debate on the demand of Hon. Mr. *Hashem Ali Khan* for a sum of Rs. 51,54,000 for expenditure under the head "Agriculture." Mr. Huq said that it would have been dangerous if they would fix it at lower acreage. He also announced that Government would ensure a fair market for the jute cultivators. Mr. Huq also observed that growing of more jute did not mean growing of less food crops. The Chief Minister also stated that cultivators were free to grow jute on any area of land as they liked. The eight annas was however the maximum area on which they were to grow jute.

The Congress party pressed their cut motion criticising the fixation of jute acreage at eight annas to vote. The motion was however lost by 10 to 78 votes, 5 members of the Muslim League party as also three members of the Coalition party remained neutral, while the European group voted against the motion. All other cut motions moved to this demand were also lost, and the entire demand was passed. The House then adjourned till Monday the 22nd.

DETENTION OF LEGISLATORS

22nd. MARCH :—A point of privilege as to whether the members of the Bengal Legislature, who are now being detained as security prisoners under the Defence of India Rules, could absent themselves from the meetings of the Legislature without the permission of the House, was raised in the Assembly to-day. Mr. *Charu Chandra Roy* (Bose Group), who raised this point of privilege, maintained that Section 68 (4) of the Act was not applicable in the case of members of the Legislature, who are now detained under the Defence of India Rules as security prisoners. These members were not willingly absenting themselves from the meetings of the Legislature. The Speaker, Mr. *Syed Nausher Ali*, said that the point of privilege raised by Mr. Roy was a very important one and that on this point he had also received a letter from the Speaker of the Orissa Assembly. He reserved his ruling.

CENSURE MOTION ON THE MINISTRY

23rd. & 24th. MARCH :—What he described as a motion of censure on the Ministry was moved to-day on behalf of the Muslim League Opposition by Mr. *Tamizuddin Khan*, ex-Minister, when the demand for a grant under General Administration was taken up. Mr. *Tamizuddin Khan* said that his motion was a motion of censure and must be taken as such. It sought to raise a discussion on "the failure of the Ministry to assume responsibility for the actions of officers of the Government" and charged the Ministry with "grave constitutional delinquency". The psychological background of this tendency as well as of the perpetration of the offence, he said, was provided by "the unnatural political situation" arising out of the Bengal Ministry's "adherence to office" in spite of the fact that the ministry did not agree with the Government of India in their policy to combat the subversive movement following the arrest of Congress leaders in August last. The Bengal Ministry did not agree with the Government of India and yet pretended to carry out the latter's policy instead of boldly avowing their disagreement and gracefully stepping out of office. He alleged that instead of resigning office, the Ministry had fallen back upon the "dangerous and preposterous alternative" of disclaiming responsibility for the actions of their officers. "Not only by his conduct but also by his utterances, innuendoes and insinuations the Chief Minister has disclaimed responsibility for the actions of permanent officials on many occasions. If things continued like this for a little while longer the result will be irretrievable administrative chaos."

Moving another cut motion, Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal* (Official Congress Parliamentary Party) demanded that the total number of instances as well as specific details in which the "advice tendered by the Council of Ministers has been superseded or sought to be modified by the Governor in regard to matters entirely within the ministerial field or within the special responsibility of the Governor "should be made known to the House". The debate was adjourned till the next day, the

24th. March, when the censure motion was defeated by 116 to 86 votes. The European group voted in favour of the motion, while the official Congress Parliamentary Party voted against the motion along with the Ministerial Party. To-day's debate lasted nearly five hours, more than a dozen speakers including the leaders of different parties participating in the discussion. The result of the voting was received with loud applause in the Ministerial benches.

Speaking on the Muslim League Opposition party's motion, the Leader of the European group, Mr. *David Hendry* said that the confessions of the Chief Minister showed, not that he was being frustrated by the permanent officials, but that he was failing to govern and direct the administration for which he was responsible. The events of this and the last session of the Assembly had shown that not only was the motion justified, but that it was an urgent necessity.

Mr. *Kiron Sankar Roy*, the Leader of the Official Congress Parliamentary Party, said that the motion was ill-advised and the arguments advanced in its favour unconvincing. His party, therefore, proposed to oppose it. He thought that in the present circumstances no single party was capable of dealing with the problems that had arisen in Bengal. The best course would be to form an administrative cabinet of all parties prepared to work the present constitution, excluding, of course, the Official Congress Party. Efforts were being made during the last few days by some leading members of the Legislature for the formation of such an all-parties government, but the present motion was a "bomb shell" which had spoiled the atmosphere in that regard.

Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mookerjee*, ex-Finance Minister and Leader of the National Party, said that the responsibility for striking at the root of the constitution did not rest on the Chief Minister, but on the Governor. He added that he was criticising the Governor, not in his personal capacity, but as part and parcel of the Government of Bengal and as the head of the executive of the Province, and claimed that he could do so. He concluded with an appeal for unity among the Hindus and Muslims in view of the present crisis.

Winding up the debate on behalf of the Opposition, Mr. *H. S. Suhrawardy*, Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Parliamentary Party, said that they were anxious to come to an agreement with any group that could deliver the goods and pool all their resources for the betterment of the province, but they refused to be made pawns in a political game. Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mookerjee* was not serious when he made the appeal for unity between Hindus and Muslims. On the plea of unity Dr. *Mookerjee*, said the speaker, wanted to create disunity among the Muslims so that his community might rule in Bengal.

Replying to the debate, the Chief Minister, Mr. *Fazlul Huq* said that he was prepared to take the fullest responsibility for the actions of officers of the Government in so far as he found that those officers had carried out their duties, true to the traditions of British rule, and of the traditions of justice, humanity, equity and righteousness. But he did not wish to encourage the idea that officials, Indians or Europeans, could flout public opinion and in the exercise of their duties trample upon the rights and liberties of the people.

The cut motion moved by Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal* (official Congress) by which he demanded that the total number of specific instances in which "the advice tendered by the Council of Ministers had been superseded or sought to be modified by the Governor in regard to matters entirely within the ministerial field or within the special responsibilities of the Governor" was negatived by the House by 101 votes to 87.

Other cut motions also having been lost, the main demand under "General Administration" was then voted without a cut. The House then adjourned.

INCIDENTS IN NOAKHALI

25th. MARCH :—Moving a cut motion in the police budget of the Government of Bengal for 1943-44, Mr. *Harendra Kumar Sur* (Official Congress) alleged that the police had utterly failed to enforce law and order in cases where military were involved. He referred to an incident in a village in Noakhali District and said that the police there failed to give protection to unarmed villagers.

The Chief Minister, Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* said that he was aware of the incident in Noakhali District where military people had committed acts which amounted to an offence under the Indian Penal Code. A magisterial enquiry was immediately held and although the main allegations were substantiated, there could not be a prosecution because there could be no identification. All that they could do was to pay compensation to the relations of four persons who had lost their

lives in consequence of the firing. In another incident the military authorities permitted the men concerned to be tried by an ordinary court and they were convicted.

WOMEN KILLED DURING SHOOTING PRACTICE

26th. MARCH :—Two women were killed as a result of practice shooting in the evacuated area in Sonarpur Thana, 24-Parganas District, according to the Chief Minister, Mr. *Fazlul Huq*, replying to a question to-day. He added that measures had been taken by the armed forces concerned to indicate the area within which firing was to be confined in such a manner as to minimise the risk of such accidents.

In connection with the case in which one *Manindra Chandra Das* of Budhair, police station Burichang, Tippera, was alleged to have been shot dead by a European soldier at Mainamati, Tippera, Mr. *Huq* said that the case was already in the file of the sessions judge, but owing to the absence, on active service at the front, of the principal military prosecution witnesses, it had not been possible to present the whole evidence in court and the trial had been consequently delayed.

BLACK MARKET AND PROFITEERING

27th MARCH :—By a majority of 10 votes, a cut motion moved by Mr. *K. A. Hamilton* (European Group) in connection with the budget demand under the head "Extraordinary Charges in India", censuring the Government for alleged failure to deal with black markets and speculation in and hoarding of foodstuffs, was rejected this afternoon, the voting being 109 to 99. The motion was supported by the European Group, the Muslim League Opposition and eight scheduled caste members in opposition, while it was opposed by the Ministerialist party and the members of the official Congress Group.

Mr. *Kiran Shankar Roy*, Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, said that they were not satisfied with the Cabinet as they thought that the food question had been bungled by them. They, however, did not approve of a vote of censure as a method of reshuffling the existing Ministry. They were for a Cabinet consisting of representatives of all parties and they were prepared to work for its constitution. Mr. Roy asked the Chief Minister to take the House into his confidence and say whether he was being frustrated by the permanent officials.

Mr. *David Hendry*, leader of the European group, said : "I want to make it quite clear that this cut motion is not a condemnation of the new Food Minister who has just taken over the new portfolio. This is a condemnation of black marketeers and speculators who are depriving people of their food, and a condemnation of the Ministry which has done nothing to stop them. We are not condemning the cultivator who holds on his paddy, for he has lost his confidence, and Government statements in the past and present have tended to increase that loss of confidence than to restore it. He knows perfectly well that when his paddy goes to the hoarder at higher price it will not in any way go to the benefit of the people. The confidence of the cultivator can be restored, and that can very well be done by propaganda and persuasion. So far nothing has been done in the direction."

Continuing, he said that this problem had not come upon the province overnight. It must have been brought about by the persistent failure of the Ministry as at present constituted to take any effective action or any action against those social lepers who were driving the country into a state of desperation.

Mr. *H. S. Suhrawardy* began by saying that the Ministry had not only failed in its food policy but had deliberately supported blackmarketeers and hoarders. He did not know where the leader of the Congress group was when the problem came up before the House last year. He seemed to be of the opinion that evils had come upon them only since the establishment of the Directorate of Civil Supplies. He would take Mr. Roy's mind back a little further. One might trace it long before such a directorate was even thought of. The price of sugar was first controlled and later came the control in price of rice. Permits were issued and not even traders could get sugar without permits. The Ministry, it was well-known, interfered with the issue of permits. There used to be long queues of applicants for permits before and in the House of the Hon. Minister in charge of the department and other Ministers including the Hon. Chief Minister.

Did, asked Mr. Suhrawardy, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy expect the House to believe that 25 or 35 shops allotted to Kali Babu was done for the benefit of the Directorate of Civil Supplies. There was no Directorate then in existence. Even the regular traders could not get their supplies, but Kali Babu could get permits for 10,000 maunds at one time. Did Mr. Roy expect the House to believe that the prosecution against Kali Babu and other favourites of the Ministers was withdrawn.....

Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal*: Who is this Kali Babu. Is he Kali Bose ?

Mr. *Suhrawardy*: Yes.

Dr. *Sanyal*: He is your friend also.

Mr. *Suhrawardy*—Dr. *Sanyal* is entirely mistaken. I heard his name but I have not seen him.

It was clear, proceeding Mr. *Suhrawardy* said, that black-market started long before the Director of Civil Supplies came into existence. And then long queues before shops established after the Directorate came into existence started. Calcutta, the city of palaces became the city of beggars. Black-markets had become the standard feature of the Ministry. They had ceased to be a scandal and they had ceased even to be a crime and they were considered a concomitant of the Ministry so long as it remained in power.

PUNISH THE HOARDERS

Discussing the question of hoarding and speculation, Mr. *Suhrawardy* said that this thing practised by persons who had traded in rice before should have been stopped right from the beginning. Hoarding was always a grave danger ; it was responsible for the sudden withdrawal of good amount of rice from circulation. People who did not wish to hoard anything began keeping back good amount of rice. In consequence more and more of the essential commodities were withdrawn from the market. The dangerous nature of hoarding should have been realised from the very beginning. They of the Moslem League Party drew pointed attention to it and suggested remedies. Unfortunately those steps never were adopted and hoarding had continued until the present time. The reason for the Government not taking the people into confidence.....

Dr. *Sanyal*: Who are the biggest hoarders ? Are not those Europeans the biggest hoarders ?

Mr. *Suhrawardy*: It does not matter who are the biggest hoarders. Steps must be taken against the biggest hoarders although they may be the biggest persons in the commercial field. What was the use of taking the last minute step in this matter ? It was no use coming to the House and attempting to wash one-self of his past guilt. The co-operation of the people was offered. It was stated that they belonged to political parties and therefore their offer was not accepted. The vast majority of the people of this province belonged either to one or the other political parties. They were kept outside, the Government being all along the sole representative of the political thought.

"Our people", said Mr. *Suhrawardy*, "are patient, they can starve, they can commit suicide but a time comes when their exasperation is bound to break the bounds of law and order. And when it passed beyond endurance you have the looting, arson and crimes which have already commenced. Is it not time that something was done, something drastic—and the only way it can be done is for the Ministry to realise what it has done and suffer if necessary self-immolation for the good of the people and as a penance for its own crimes ? The Hon. Chief Minister does not appear to appreciate mass psychology. People can bear up to a point. It they lose respect for law and established order then no restraint can possibly be put on them. I hope the Ministry will not bring the country to that sorry pass.

PEOPLE WANTED CHANGE

Proceeding Mr. *Suhrawardy* stated that he did not follow the arguments of the leader of the Congress group when he stated that a chance should be given to the new Minister for Civil Supplies. The very fact that Mr. Banerjee had been put in charge of the department was itself a censure on his predecessor for his incompetence. But if this was allowed to go uncensured then at every turn a Minister might be put in charge of a new portfolio and there would be occasion for giving him a chance. Apart from that Mr. Banerjee was in the Cabinet when this change took place. The Minister whom he had succeeded was his colleague and because all the Ministers has joint responsibility for the acts done by one or the other, no Minister could save himself of the responsibility and acts of his colleague or of his predecessor. Besides he would ask the House to believe him that the very name of this Ministry was nauseating outside. The people outside wanted a change and the Moslems had shown that Mr. Huq and his Ministry did not enjoy the confidence of the people. If the Ministry had enjoyed the confidence of the people, then Mr. Huq would have a better reception from the country than the defeat of his present supporters including one of his ministers. He would make bold to say, although he might not probably have justification in saying so—having talked with his Hindu brethren, having discussed with them and particularly in the near

past—he would make bold to say that Mr. Huq did not enjoy the confidence of the Hindus as well. Wherever they had gone and talked about the Hindu-Muslim settlement, they had found the Hindus speaking bitterly about the present Ministry. Mr. Huq and his friends were all exposed, because all the communities both inside and outside the House were now aware that Mr. Huq changed his opinion as it suited his prospects. He regretted that some Hindu leaders were still utilising Mr. Huq. They were propping him up because it was advantageous to do so. Mr. Huq the other day stated that he would get 50,000 men supporting him. Mr. Suhrawardy did not think that Mr. Huq would get the support of those Hindus who believed in Hindu-Moslem settlement. He did not think that he would get the support of that vast and growing majority of the Hindus who believed that there should be a settlement as early as possible between the Congress and the Moslem League. It was the support of those few who believed that this Ministry ought to continue because through Mr. Huq they could preserve their influence on the administration of the country.

Proceeding, Mr. Suhrawardy said that Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy had said that if Mr. Huq went out, Sir Nazimuddin would come into the picture. Could he have the support of the Hindus? They could not, said the speaker, answer that question. But they could make it plain that they were going to make a determined effort to secure the co-operation of the Hindus. For the last five years the Ministry in Bengal had depended and relied only upon the support of one community. If the reins of the Government were placed in their hands, whether it was the party of Mr. Roy or the suspended Congress Party or the party led by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, it should be their endeavour, even if they did not succeed, in securing their co-operation. The other day, Dr. Mookerjee jeered them stating that the Moslem League Party approached them with a proposal. Perhaps Dr. Mookerjee thought that by giving out that news he would be able to expose them showing that the Moslem League intended to make friends with the Hindus. That was entirely misunderstanding the position of the Moslem League. Dr. Mookerjee perhaps believes that the Moslem League Party was a blood-thirsty organisation and was out to rob the Hindus. They had been making speeches in mofussil to find out what the Muslim community thought and he could tell the House that wherever they had spoken of the Hindu-Muslim co-operation—that in this country they had got to live side by side—the Muslim community had supported them and had applauded them. The Moslem community had endorsed their efforts to bring about peace between the Hindus and Muslims and establish communal harmony. They had tried desperately for it not because they wanted to get power but because they felt that Hindus and Muslims must get together. They had felt that so long as Mr. Huq was there, so long the Hindu party could utilise him, there was very little chance of a compromise between them. A compromise and an honourable understanding could come, if that impediment was removed. It was often said that the British Government could remain in power only by dividing the Hindus and Muslims. That was exactly the position here. They could come to an agreement if that particular person was not propped up. He could make this declaration with a full sense of responsibility of the Muslim League that should this impediment be removed they would sit together and on the part of the Muslim League there could be no stone unturned to come to an agreement between the Hindus and the Muslims. He therefore urged the House to support the motion of censure on the Ministry.

The Hon. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister said that Mr. Suhrawardy had concluded his remark by saying that so long as a particular individual, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, was alive there would be no peace in Bengal and there was hardly any prospect of a stable and useful Government. Mr. Suhrawardy was in a communicative mood this morning because he, was apparently in high spirits that the dissolution of this cabinet was at hand and that he would have once again the opportunity of having the commerce portfolio."

"I do not know if the House is aware," Mr. Huq said, that Mr. Suhrawardy is a man who throughout has shown hostility towards me especially of a personal character.

Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy: Mr. Speaker, every time when statements have been made regarding his political conduct, Mr. Fazlul Huq has replied by personal attacks and personal insinuations.

Mr. Speaker: I will not allow that.

Mr. Fazlul Huq: I may tell you without going into details that his hostility to me has been traditional. He has never missed an opportunity of doing harm to

me, and he has delivered a speech to-day full of venom of a personal character, and not as a public man or leader of a community or a party. I would appeal to those who go in the same lobby with Mr. Suhrawardy to-day if they really and sincerely believe that my personal presence in the cabinet or the fact that I am still alive can ever be taken to be an obstacle to good Government and prosperity of Bengal. If not, I will urge them to dissociate themselves from the observations which have been made by Mr. Suhrawardy."

As regards the main question Mr. P. N. Banerjee had replied and he had told that whatever might be the present condition of affairs, however unsatisfactory the Department of Civil Supplies might have been, it was hardly justifiable and fair to throw the blame on the Ministry for what had been done or what had not been done, for what had occurred due to circumstances over which the Ministry had no control. It was obvious that at a time like this and when they were faced with an imminent enemy invasion, the Ministry felt that it would not be proper for the Minister who had practically no knowledge or experience of business to interfere with what the Director of Civil Supplies had been doing or to thrust their own opinion in modification or amendment of the policy that was laid down by the Civil Supplies Directorate. The Directorate was headed by one of the most eminent Indian Civil Service men. Whatever his faults might be, he had a reputation of being a very resourceful energetic and honest public servant. His devotion to duty was well known and they all thought—when his name was suggested for the post of the Director of Civil Supplies—that the matter would be in a safe hand. Mr. Pinnell had before him examples of what had been done in England. He tried to follow the method that had been adopted in the United Kingdom with such modification as was necessary for the peculiar circumstances of Bengal.

Dr. N. Sanyal :—Who told you that ?

Mr. Huq : That is my information, I got the information from Mr. Pinnell.

Mr. Huq said that he was not defending what Mr. Pinnell had done, but he was defending the officer, Mr. Pinnell. The Ministry trusted that he would be able to do something to meet the exigencies of the situation. Mr. Pinnell was assisted by Indian members of the Civil Service who had great reputation behind them as successful public servants. The ministry thought that the policy they had formulated would be the best policy in the circumstances that had arisen.

A voice : They were not trusted.

Mr. Huq : No, they were trusted. We have to take them into trust and if it is found that the policy that they have undertaken had not met with complete success, the Ministers cannot be blamed of that failure. Apart from the question of policy, it is true that at the present moment the situation is very acute. It is easy to formulate a charge-sheet against the Ministry upon a scheme which at the present moment is drawing the attention of every Indian and European. It is easy to draw a conclusion in condemnation of the Ministry for all that have been done for the past few months.

"I do not for a moment," Mr. Huq continued, "minimise the seriousness of the situation. If there has been a failure, and if the House thinks that the failure was due to what the Ministry has done, it is not for me to dictate the opinion. They should be examined. So far as I am concerned and I say this with the grave sense of responsibility that I have never been anxious to cling to office." (Loud applause from the Ministerial benches, and counter jeerings from the Opposition benches).

"There is no room for murmuring on this point," Mr. Huq continued. "I have never been anxious for office, and during the last few months I have told His Excellency the Governor to take steps to constitute a National Government in Bengal composed of representatives of all sections of the House. I have asked His Excellency and also my friends of the European group to use their influence to constitute a National Government."

"I may tell the House" Mr. Fazlul Huq said, "that even yesterday I told His Excellency. I have written to him that nothing is nearer to my heart than to see a National Government established in Bengal, and I have gone so far as to say that if at any time it is found that I am a hindrance to the formation of a complete National Government I will resign. If necessary, I will even remain *far in order that such a Government is formed. It is for His Excellency to decide in consultation with the leaders of the groups what should be the form of Government that will be best suited to meet the needs and requirements of the province."

"I do not for a moment wish to cling to office if I find that I have forfeited

the confidence of the members of this House or for that matter of my countrymen." (Applause).

Mr. *Fazlul Huq* said that it was not a satisfactory state of things at a time when the situation was so serious—without having a proper machinery of Government. It was now proper at present to have a party system of Government. Party system of Government was bound to give rise to bickerings, charges and counter-charges on the floor of this House. "It is a time," Mr. Huq said, "when the best talents in the country should be harnessed to the cause of the province. It is a time when everyone should give up all considerations, party or otherwise, put their heads together to find out what is the best remedy for the present state of things in this country."

"So far as this is concerned," Mr. Huq proceeded, "I have pleaded for the formulation of a complete National Government. I am saying this now. This is not the first occasion that I am saying this. I have been saying it for month after month, week after week. If I am a hindrance, I am prepared to walk out. I do not wish to be a hindrance for the formation of a complete national cabinet in Bengal. If it be the opinion of Mr. *Suhrawardy* that for its formation I should be blot out of existence I am prepared to take that fate. I do not want to be there where I am not wanted. But I would say if at any time it is felt that my services are necessary they will be at the disposal of my countrymen in any way they would like me to serve them."

Proceeding, Mr. *Fazlul Huq* said that Mr. *Suhrawardy* had stated that Mr. Huq had never asked for their co-operation or the co-operation of the public in tackling the various problems. Many a time, the Chief Minister said, they wanted to set up a committee of all parties and Mr. Huq would remind Mr. *Suhrawardy* that they wanted to have their (Muslim League) cooperation. But for various reasons known to himself, Mr. *Suhrawardy* could not condescend to give the benefit of his service. The question of food supplies, the question of necessities of life could never be a party question. "It is a matter of vital importance that we should always place it beyond party or sectional politics. From that point of view it is essentially necessary that there should be a non-party cabinet in power."

As regards the cut motion he had already submitted that although things were unsatisfactory and although it might be that the Ministry should have interfered or at least intervened in what was being done, nothing would be gained by merely passing a vote of censure. "I submit," he said, "we are here to bear great responsibility. We have never for a moment assumed to ourselves the position that we alone can solve the problems. But we have done, we have tried to our best under most difficult circumstances and if there are people who can do better, it is for the party. I shall be ready and willing to co-operate and bring into operation any bill for meeting the situation with which we have been faced." (Applause and cheers).

The cut motion was then put to vote and lost, with the result stated. The House then adjourned till Monday the 29th.

MR. HUQ RESIGNS—HIS STATEMENT

29th. MARCH :—The Hon. Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* resigned his office as Chief Minister. He handed in his resignation last night and the resignation was accepted by H. E. the Governor. This information was disclosed in the Assembly by Mr. *Fazlul Huq* this morning when the House met to consider budget demands for grants.

Mr. Huq's resignation followed a ninety-minute talk with H. E. the Governor last night during which a long discussion took place about the formation of a National Cabinet. Mr. Huq gave in the Assembly certain details of these discussions and added that he would make a further statement on his return from Delhi, whither he was proceeding to-morrow night.

Mr. Huq had been the head of three successive Ministries in Bengal and the present one was formed in December 1941. Last week two motions of censure were moved against the Ministry in the Assembly. Both of them were lost but the Government's majority on the second occasion was reduced from 30 to 10.

Before the business of the House was taken up, Mr. *Kiron Shankar Roy*, Leader of the official Congress Parliamentary Party, said that the city was agog with the rumour that the Chief Minister had tendered his resignation. He wanted to know if it was a fact. Mr. Roy also wanted to know under what circumstances the Chief Minister had resigned and further whether his resignation meant the resignation of the Cabinet also.

Replying to Mr. Kiron Shankar Roy, Mr. *Fazlul Huq* said: "I would have been reluctant to say anything. But as a pointed question has been put to me by the Leader of the Congress Party, I feel I owe it to the House to take it into my confidence and to state the facts. It is true that last night I was sent for by the Governor, and I was with him from 7-30 p. m. to over 9 p. m. A long discussion took place about the formation of a National Cabinet and various proposals were put forward, some of which I could not accept consistent with my self-respect. His Excellency the Governor suggested to me that I should formally tender my resignation, and I said that I could not do so unless I had time to consult my party and my colleagues. To this, the Governor did not agree and I had to sign a letter of resignation. I do not wish to disclose any further details just now and I wish to make a further statement on my return from Delhi, where I am proceeding to-morrow night. The letter of resignation which I was persuaded to sign in order to make the formation of a National Government possible at the earliest, has been accepted by His Excellency, and the letter of acceptance reached me at about 10 last night. In spite of all that has happened, I maintain and I am confident, I still enjoy the confidence of the majority of the House. Therefore my answer is that I have tendered my resignation and that the resignation has been accepted. As regards the circumstances, I have made a statement, and I would defer a detailed statement to a subsequent date."

Mr. *K. S. Roy*: What is the position of the Cabinet in view of your reply?

Mr. *Huq* said that the constitutional position was that with his resignation *ipso facto* the Cabinet went.

"Whether my colleagues go out of the Cabinet and formally tender their resignation, it is not for me to say. So far as I am concerned, I have tendered my resignation and that resignation has been accepted," Mr. *Huq* added.

Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal* (Official Congress): Is it a fact that the letter of resignation was kept typed and ready at Government House for your signature and that you were also asked to choose between signing that letter and being dismissed?

Mr. *Huq*: If my friend, Dr. *Sanyal* puts that question to me as a member of this House and claims the privileges of the House to have that statement from me, I have to make a statement. Of course, if he insists, I will do that.

Dr. *Sanyal*: I do, Sir.

Mr. *Huq*: It is true that a letter of resignation was ready typed. (Cries of "shame, shame" from the Ministerialist Party and the Congress benches).

Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali (Muslim League Opposition): On your suggestion? (Cries of "no, on" from the Ministerialist Party benches).

Dr. *Sanyal* (to *Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali*): Would you kindly enlighten us?

Proceeding, Dr. *Sanyal* observed: In the circumstances, we feel that the House would be unanimous in demanding the recall of the Governor, Sir *John Herbert*, (Cries of "hear, hear" from the Ministerialist Party benches). Would you, Mr. *Speaker*, let us know the procedure for that?

The hon *Speaker* (Mr. *Syed Nauser Ali*): Order, order. So far as the business of the House is concerned, let us finish it. I do not mean the business of the agenda. Let us see what we can do now. Whether there can be any recalling of the Governor that is a separate matter. You may consider it on a subsequent occasion. Now, Mr. *Huq*, may I know from you, what is the position as regards Ministers' responsibility? Is it joint or several or joint and several?

Mr. *Huq*: Joint and several. Under the circumstances as a matter of fact, constitutionally the Cabinet ought to be *functus officio* with my resignation. I am not sure at this moment whether any formal resignation has been tendered by the other Ministers. So far as I am concerned the matter is finished.

Dr. *Sanyal*: In view of this statement of the Chief Minister, we feel that the House can no longer proceed with the Budget discussion and therefore, we want first of all a vote of confidence to be moved in the Chief Minister, Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* and his Cabinet colleagues. (Cries of "hear hear" from the Ministerialist Party benches). I therefore give you, Mr. *Speaker*, due notice thereof just now, immediately after the statement and I would request you to postpone further discussion of the Budget until the disposal of that motion of confidence.

Mr. *Huq*: As regards the Budget cannot some other Minister move it? (Cries "no on" from all sides of the House).

The *Speaker*: In view of the statement made by the Chief Minister that his

resignation has been accepted and that in view further of the fact that the responsibility of the Ministry is joint and several the Ministry in my opinion, has ceased to exist. Consequently, no business of the House whatsoever can be transacted unless a new Ministry is formed. The House, I declare, stands adjourned for a fortnight.

APPLICATION OF SEC. 93—OFFICIAL STATEMENT

31st. MARCH :—His Excellency the Governor of Bengal brought into force the provisions of Section 93 of the Government of India Act 1935 and took upon himself the administration of the province, announced a communique from Government House, Calcutta.

Narrating the events leading up to the present decision bringing into force the provisions of Section 93, the Communique said :

On Sunday the 28th March, the hon'ble the Chief Minister, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, in order to enable the exploration of the possibility of re-forming the Ministry on a wider and more stable basis tendered his resignation to His Excellency, who accepted it. On Monday, the 29th March, Mr Huq announced in the Assembly that he had resigned. On the question being raised whether the other members of the Council of Ministers were competent to function, the Speaker expressed the view that they were *functus officio*, and stated that as there seemed to be no Ministry, the Assembly stood adjourned for a fortnight. The effect of this order of adjournment were that the Assembly could not, without legal question, be reassembled before the 1st April.

The 29 March had been fixed by His Excellency as the final date for voting of demands for grants for the financial year 1943-44. His Excellency was advised that unless the Ministry could secure the agreement of the legislature before the 1st April to demands for grants there would, after that date, be no lawful supply available for the administration. Meanwhile, following Mr. Huq's statement regarding his resignation, the other Ministers represented to His Excellency that they considered themselves to have demitted office and they subsequently formally tendered their resignations, which His Excellency accepted.

His Excellency found himself on the 31st March without a ministry and in a position where it was impossible to put through the Assembly the remaining demands for grants before the 1st April. Emergent action to secure supply before that date thus became an imperative necessity. Having explored alternative possibilities, His Excellency has had no choice but, with the utmost reluctance, to bring into force the provisions of Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935. He has, therefore, issued the necessary proclamation under that section and taken upon himself the administration of the province.

His Excellency proposes as soon as he is satisfied that a stable and representative Ministry is available which commands the confidence of the legislature and is willing to assume the responsibilities of office, to revoke the proclamation. It is the earnest desire of His Excellency that the emergency administration under Section 93, which was introduced primarily to resolve the difficulties relating to supply, should be replaced at the earliest possible moment by a regularly constituted Ministry.

NEW MINISTRY FORMED—OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

24th. APRIL :—The Governor of Bengal revoked to-day, with the concurrence of the Governor-General, the Proclamation bringing into force in Bengal the provisions of Section 93 of the Government of India Act 1935, which was issued on March 31, 1943. This was announced in a Proclamation by H. E. the Governor to-day.

His Excellency appointed the following as members of his Council of Ministers, with the portfolios mentioned against them : (1) Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin—Home Department (including Civil Co-ordination) ; (2) Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy—Civil Supply ; (3) Mr. T. C. Goswami—Finance ; Mr. Tamizuddin Khan—Education ; (5) Mr. B. P. Pain—Communications and Works (6) Khan Bahadur M. A. Muazzemuddin Hussain—Agriculture (including Rural Reconstruction) ; (7) Mr. Tarakanath Mukerjee—Revenue (including Evacuation and Relief) ; (8) Khan Bahadur Nawab Musharraf Hussain—Judicial and Legislative ; (9) Khwaja Shahabuddin—Commerce, Labour and Industries (including Post-war Reconstruction) ; (10) Mr. I. H. Burman—Forest and Excise ; (11) Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmed—Public Health and Local Self-Government ; (12) Mr. Pulin Bhari Mullick—Publicity ; (13) Mr. Jagendra Nath Mandal—Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness.

The new Ministers took the oath of office to-day.

The Bengal Legislative Council

LIST OF MEMBERS

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|---|--|
| 1. KHAN BAHADUR M. ABDUL KARIM | 32. MR. MOHAMED HOSSAIN |
| 2. MAULANA MUHAMMAD AKRAM KHAN | 33. MR. NARENDRA CHANDRA DATTA |
| 3. KHAN BAHADUR MOHAMMAD ASAF KHAN | 34. NARESH NATH MOOKERJEE |
| 4. KHAN BAHADUR ATAUR RAHMAN | 35. KHAN BAHADUR NAZIRUDDIN AHMED |
| 5. MR. BANKIM CHANDRA DATTA | 36. RAI RADHICA BHUSAN ROY BAHADUR |
| 6. RAJA BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SINHA BAHADUR | 37. MR. RANAJIT PAL CHOWDHURY |
| 7. MR. D. J. COHEN | 38. THE HON'BLE MR. SATYENDRA CHANDRA MITRA |
| 8. MR. E. C. ORMOND | 39. KHAN BAHADUR M. SHAMSUZZOHA |
| 9. BEGUM HAMIDA MOMIN | 40. MR. SHRISH CHANDRA CHAKRAVERTI |
| 10. MR. H. C. A. HUNTER | 41. KHAN SAHIB SUBIDALI MOLLA |
| 11. MR. HUMAYUN KABIR | 42. MR. W. B. G. LAIDLAW |
| 12. RAI SAHIB INDU BHUSAN SARKAR | 43. KHAN SAHIB ABDUL AZIZ |
| 13. RAI SAHIB JATINDRA MOHAN SEN | 44. KHAN BAHADUR KAZI ABDUR RASHID |
| 14. MR. KADER BAKSH | |
| 15. MR. KANAI LAL GOSWAMI | 45. MR. ABUL QUASEM |
| 16. ALHADJ KHAN BAHADUR SHAIKH MUHAMMAD JAN | 46. MR. ALTAFAI ALI |
| 17. ALHADJ KHAN BAHADUR KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ESMAIL | 47. AMULYADHAN ROY |
| 18. MR. NAGENDRA NARAYAN RAY | 48. THE HON'BLE SIR BIJOY PRASAD SINGHA ROY |
| 19. DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI | 49. MR. BIRENDRA KISHORE ROY CHOUDHURY |
| 20. KHAN BAHADUR REZZAUL HAIDER CHOWDHURY | 50. RAI BROJENDRA MOHAN MAITRA BAHADUR |
| 21. MR. SACHINDRA NARAYAN SANYAL | 51. MR. DHIRENDRA LAL BARUA |
| 22. KHAN SAHIB ABDUL HAMID CHOWDHURY | 52. HAMIDUL HUQ CHOWDHURY. |
| 23. KHAN BAHADUR SYED MUHAMMAD GHAZIUL HUQ | 53. RAI SAHIB JOGENDRA NATH RAY |
| 24. MR. HUMAYUN REZA CHOWDHURY | 54. MR. KAMINI KUMAR DUTTA |
| 25. MR. J. B. ROSS | 55. DR. KASIRUDDIN TALUKDAR |
| 26. RAI KESHAB CHANDRA BANERJEE BAHADUR | 56. MR. LALIT CHANDRA DAS |
| | 57. MR. LATAFAT HOSSAIN |
| 27. MRS. K. D'ROZARIO | 58. MR. MOAZZEMALI CHOUDHURY <i>alias</i> LAI, MIA |
| 28. MR. KHORSHED ALAM CHOWDHURY | 59. KHAN BAHADUR MUKHLESUR RAHMAN |
| 29. MR. KRISHNA CHANDRA ROY CHOWDHURY, M.B.E. | 60. MR. NUR AHAMED |
| 30. RAI MANMATHA NATH BOSE BAHADUR | 61. KHAN BAHADUR SAIED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSSAIN |
| 31. MR. MEEBAHUDDIN AHMED | 62. SIR THOMAS LAMB |
| | 63. W. F. SCOTT-KERR |

Proceedings of the Bengal Council

Budget Session—Calcutta—12th. February to 2nd. April 1943

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION

Members belonging to different parties in the Bengal Legislative Council combined in paying tributes to the life and work of *Sir Thomas Lamb* at the opening of the Budget session of the Council held on the 12th. February 1943. As a mark of respect to the memory of *Sir Thomas*, who was a sitting member of the legislature, the Council was adjourned for the day till the 17th without transacting any business.

BUDGET FOR 1943-44

17th. FEBRUARY :—Mr. A. K. *Fazlul Huq* presented the Budget estimates for 1943-44 which he had on the previous day placed before the Lower House.

There were notices of as many as six adjournment motions, but the movers did not press them in the hope that two special days would be allotted for the discussion of the food and jute situation. The Council then adjourned.

FUNDS FOR FOOD GRAINS

18th. FEBRUARY :—A supplementary demand for a grant for the current year amounting to over Rs. 3 crores was presented by Mr. A. K. *Fazlul Huq* to-day. Explaining the details he said that more than half of this total was outside the revenue account and came under two heads, namely, Interest-free Advances and Loans and Advances. The demand under the former was a little over Rs. 79 lakhs, including an advance of Rs. 53 lakhs to the Directorate of Civil Supplies for the purchase of foodgrains and the distribution of imported stocks of sugar and an advance of Rs. 15 lakhs for the acquisition of motor vehicles for civil defence purposes. The demand under Loans and Advances was Rs. 96½ lakhs. The extra expenditure was due mainly to the distribution of agricultural loans on a large scale in areas devastated by the recent cyclone and flood.

Under the head Famine the demand was Rs. 48½ lakhs. This was due to the organization of large-scale relief measures in the cyclone-affected areas. Other large demands were about Rs. 32 lakhs under Extraordinary Charges, Rs. 21½ lakhs under Police and Rs. 18 lakhs under Agriculture. The increase under Extraordinary Charges was due partly to non-votable civil defence expenditure undertaken by the Government in regard to its own property or for its own employees and partly to special emergency measures such as employment of additional wartime police, the grant of separation allowances in non-family areas, the organisation of Home Guards and the setting up of a Directorate of Civil Supplies.

Out of the total increase of Rs. 21½ lakhs under Police, over Rs. 13 lakhs were due to the grant of enhanced dearness allowance and the police emergency areas bonus, the balance being accounted for by the expansion of the Civic Guards organization and the rise in the cost of clothing and other materials. The increase of Rs. 18 lakhs under Agriculture was due to the purchase and distribution of seeds of various kinds of food crops in connexion with the "Grow More Food" campaign.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S RELEASE URGED

19th. FEBRUARY :—The Council passed a resolution to-day requesting the Government of Bengal to move the Government of India for the immediate and unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi. The resolution was opposed by the European members while the Moslem Leaguers remained neutral.

Mr. *Lalit Chandra Das*, who moved the resolution, said that Mahatmaji was known throughout the world as the greatest man of the age. He was now 74 years of age. On humanitarian grounds, if for nothing else, he should be released.

Mr. *Kamini Kumar Dutta*, leader of the Congress Party, lending his support to the motion said that the Mahatma was known as the greatest apostle of peace. For the sake of humanity and for the sake of world peace he should be released. His death would be an irreparable loss to humanity. Mr. *Hamidul Huq Chaudhury*, on behalf of the Moslem League, said that nothing would have given them greater pleasure to associate themselves with the resolution, had it not been for the fact that Mahatma Gandhi had undertaken the fast in support of a political demand on which they as Moslem Leaguers were fundamentally at variance. They had not been able to induce Gandhiji or the Congress to accept the Moslem point of view, namely the place of Mussalmans in the future constitution of India. So it was not easy for them to lend wholehearted support to the resolution. The Moslem League was not responsible for the situation that had arisen nor had they the power to secure his release. In view of the political implication of this fast their party would, therefore, remain neutral. *Khan Bahadur Ataur Rahman*, on behalf of the Progressive Party, said though they did not share the political views of Gandhiji they must acknowledge his contributions in social and economic spheres. If they would have followed the programme of Mahatmaji they would not have faced the nakedness that was staring them. They would support the resolution. Mr. *J. B. Ross*, on behalf of the European group, regretted that he thought it his duty to oppose the resolution. The fast was undertaken by Mahatma Gandhi, as far as he could see, from purely political motive, that was to obtain his release. He had also said that the fast was one of capacity. And it remained with him to call off the fast if he felt that it

would endanger his life or he had overestimated his strength. While the death of Mahatma Gandhi would be an irreparable loss to this country, they also felt that the whole basis of ordered Government would be nullified, if a person who had been incarcerated in the judgment of those who had incarcerated him, resorted to fast so that the sentence or detention be cancelled. If so, the writ of the legislature in the country would not run. It would be a better gesture if they appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to call the fast off. In that case they would support the resolution. The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq said so far as Gandhiji's action was a protest against the policy of the Central Government they had nothing to say. No Provincial Government could criticise the policy of the Central Government. But the fact remained that Gandhiji's fast had cast a deep gloom throughout the country. They fully shared that feeling and as human beings and on humanitarian grounds they associated themselves with the prayer for release. As the Government of Bengal they would forward the proceedings of the House to the Central Government. The House at this stage adjourned till Monday, the 22nd.

EXCESS DEMANDS FOR 1940-41

22nd. FEBRUARY :—The Council had a short session to-day when the only item of business before the House was the consideration of Excess Demands for 1940-41. Mr. Nur Ahmed of the Moslem League was the only speaker to offer some criticisms. He prefaced his remarks by saying that they were very much concerned over the condition of one of the greatest men whom India had ever produced, who, as reported in the Press, was hovering between life and death. Referring to certain items of the demand, he said that they should have been brought before the House earlier. The Hon. Mr. P. N. Banerjee, who replied on behalf of the Government, said that these expenditures were incurred at a time when they were not ministers. Still, as Government was a continuous institution they had to own responsibility for the work of their predecessors. These demands could not be brought up before the House earlier as the Auditor-General's report was not received until May, 1942.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

23rd. FEBRUARY :—Government's policy in relation to various departments of administration was subjected to sharp criticism when discussion on the budget estimates for 1943-44 was initiated to-day. Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutt, Leader of the Congress party opening the debate, felt that there was no policy behind the budget at all. It appeared to him a mere conglomeration of certain makeshift arrangements. It was no excuse to say, he added, that because it was war time the only business of the Government was to make make-shift arrangements and carry on the war effort. Mr. Dutt had no objection to prosecution of war efforts which were bound to be carried on. He had, however, heard people talk glibly of the new order. He would like to inquire, were they prepared to welcome the new order of things? Were they then trying to make themselves fit for the reception of the new order? If so, what were the actual facts the province was confronted with? All the nation-building departments had been completely starved. There had been reduction under the heads, Education, Public Health, Industry and Agriculture. Mr. Dutt recalled that certain provisions had been made for furtherance of adult education but the amount was not utilised. While this was the case here, China, passing through a life-or-death struggle, had not only carried on her education but, at the same time, given it a fresh orientation on a huge scale.

In the domain of public health no provision for sinking tube-wells in rural areas had been made in the budget on the plea that materials for tube-wells were not available. It seemed that so long as the war lasted the rural people would have to go without water! The absence of quinine had left the masses a prey to malaria which disease was creating havoc in the countryside, especially in Eastern Bengal. Quinine could be produced in the province but no attempt at cinchona plantation had been made. Food problem, Mr. Dutt proceeded, was an agricultural problem. Had there been an adequate food planning, a comprehensive agricultural policy on the part of the Government in the present situation would never have arisen. Had there been a regular system of marketing cottage industries the people would not have been forced to buy their essential requisites at fabulous prices. There was no policy but the policy of drifting. If there was any policy at all, Mr. Dutt would say, it was the policy of scramble for jobs for the supporters and dependents of the Government. There was a Civil Supply Directorate but for the solution of the food problem of this country experts had to be requisitioned from the United Kingdom. There was, in the opinion of the speaker, hardly any co-ordination between the Directorate and the district magistrates. Price control without providing

means of supply had been resorted to and it naturally resulted in the growth of black market and prosperity of profiteers and hoarders. If things went on in this manner, Mr. Dutt felt, doomsday would not be very distant. If there was no way out the country would welcome even rationing and even that would be better than the present state of affairs. Mr. Dutt suggested more effective co-ordination between the Centre and provinces. The central committee should be in touch with district committees which should consist of real representatives of the people. The whole thing must be tackled boldly, honestly and sincerely. The operation of extraordinary laws and the Defence of India Rules which was the concern of the provincial Government, Mr. Dutt continued, had left no vestige of civil liberty for the people. The Provincial Government had never cared to scrutinise what classes of cases were tried by special tribunals and special magistrates. There were cases transferred to special tribunals which ought to have been tried by ordinary courts with the right to appeal. There were lapses on the part of the Provincial Government in the operation of emergency laws. But in the budget ample provision had been made for oiling the machinery for the maintenance of law and order.

Even during wartime, *Khan Bahadur Moazzemuddin Hossein* said, the Government could have done a lot for the improvement of agriculture and industries. By doing so they could have rendered real assistance to war efforts. Government had, in effect, let slip an excellent opportunity for bettering the economic condition of the masses. In order to augment revenues the Government had sought to impose taxes on certain kinds of amusements and other heads. The Khan Bahadur would not object to those taxes. Rather the rates proposed should have been higher and the scope should have been made more extensive by including in it taxes on cigar, cigarettes and silk, that would have touched the pockets of the rich alone. Advocating the imposition of an agricultural income tax on agriculturists having an income of over Rs. 2,000 a year, the Khan Bahadur held that they were to-day in a position to pay the tax, for the price of crops had risen by two to three hundred per cent. He characterised the failure of the Government to spend a part of the proceeds of the Sales tax to the betterment of the people as a "breach of faith." The Government, he concluded, had not only failed to initiate any ameliorative measures but they had definitely ignored the claims of the masses. They were doing practically nothing to relieve the deplorable condition prevailing in the country.

24th. FEBRUARY :—Speaking on the Budget estimates, *Mr. Birendra Kishore Ray Chaudhury* said that the stop gap arrangement by which the Home Minister had to hold the Finance portfolio also after the resignation of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee should have been replaced long before the presentation of the Budget. Referring to Civil Defence expenditure, he said that this expenditure should be wholly borne by the Central Government. He criticised the activities of the Civil Supplies Directorate, which he said, had failed to cope with the situation. The emergency should have been foreseen by the Government and suitable arrangements made. The muddle in Civil Supplies Department, which was run by I.C.S. officers, was a sad commentary on the vaunted efficiency of the I.C.S. *Mr. Dhirendralal Barua* criticised the absence of any special provision for the advancement of the education of Buddhists. *Mr. Nur Ahmed* (Moslem League) characterised the budget as do-nothing and gloomy from the national point of view. It did not contain any scheme for the betterment of the masses of which the Chief Minister claimed to be the leader. He referred to what had been done by the Punjab Government for the improvement of the condition of the masses. *Khan Saheb Abdul Quasem* (Moslem League) said that the present supporters of the Government called themselves progressives, but what they had done was to keep in check the ameliorative measures which had been initiated by the previous ministry. *Mr. Kader Buksh* (Moslem League) said that the present Ministry had shown activity only in the direction of keeping down their political opponents. *Maulana Akram Khan* in a satirical speech twitted the Government with neglecting the vital bread problem.

25th. FEBRUARY :—"The present food situation is due mostly to the fact that there is really a shortage of available food-stuffs in the country", remarked the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, Chief Minister, in reply to the general discussion of the budget to-day. With reference to the failure of the Government to deal with "black markets", the Chief Minister said that these were there all over the world. "Even Great Britain is not free from it. There are countries on the Continent where black markets are positive scandals. They arise out of the fact

that in abnormal times there are people who try to make fortunes out of the misfortunes of other people. It is difficult to control because it is a kind of dishonesty which is inherent in a certain section of humanity." He assured that all that Government could do to control these things would be done, and Government proposed to control as much as possible the abnormal situation that now prevailed in the country.

The Chief Minister went on that their field of taxation was very limited and they had got to make a very careful choice. As regards the suggestions of taxation on luxuries and agricultural income, he informed the House that taxing luxuries had been under the consideration of Government for some time past and the Government was still considering the question. As regards taxation on agricultural income, a bill would have been introduced but had been held up for circumstances over which they had no control. Government had however not lost sight of these two possible sources of revenue. He indicated that a modest scheme for establishing communal harmony had been put forward and they hoped to be able to take up this question and make some beginning before the close of the present financial year. He also announced that they had made some progress towards materialising the idea of having a full-fledged Fishery Department in the province. Reference had been made, continued the Chief Minister, to certain confidential circulars in connexion with Home Guards to the effect that Government recommended to district authorities that only persons recommended by the Hindu Mahasabha should be recruited. There was absolutely no basis for such a rumour he said. With regard to the criticism that there was no policy behind the budget and that it was a heritage of the past, the Chief Minister said that it was impossible to break away from the past. They had got to carry on and build on the past. As regards the policy underlying the budget, he reiterated, the policy was to provide for such measures as were indispensably necessary for the purpose of civil defence for the effective prosecution of the war. With the limited resources at their disposal that was the only practical thing to do. Giving the assurance that everything possible would be done by the Government to utilise the available supply of quinine to the best advantage, the Hon. Mr. *Huq* referred to the criticism made by Mr. *J. B. Ross* (with regard to the proposal of Grow More Food campaign), and he was prepared to admit that there was a great deal of truth in the criticism made by Mr. *Ross*. Mr. *Huq* then referred to the Black Markets and Government's determination to control them.

Mr. *J. B. Ross* in his speech expressed his party's dissatisfaction with regard to the failure of the Government to deal with the Black Market and speculations. His criticism of the budget was that there was no indication in it of any attempt to develop agriculture which was absolutely essential if "Grow More Food" campaign was to be effective.

Dr. *Radha Kumud Mukherjee* emphasised the initial financial handicap which was throttling the economic life of the country. He urged the Bengal Government to take up with the Central Government, the question of redistribution of revenue between Bengal and the Centre. The Bengal Government catered for a population of about 60 millions with a revenue of 16 crores which showed that there was not enough money to go round. Nation-building departments could not thrive so long as this initial financial inequity remained.

Dr. *Kumud Sankar Ray* stressed the character of the present war which was a total war and therefore if they wanted to get the maximum work from the people, it should be seen that their needs were met. They could not expect unhealthy people putting forth maximum efforts in times of emergency.

Khan Bahadur *Naziruddin Ahmed*, Prof. *Humayun Kabir* and Mr. *Lalit Chandra Das* also participated in the discussion. The Council then adjourned.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS DISCUSSED

26th. FEBRUARY:—The Council discussed to-day the supplementary demand for the current year amounting to over Rs. 3 crores presented by the Chief Minister, Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq*. Initiating the discussion, Khan Bahadur *Saiyed Muzzamuddin Hossain*, leader of the Opposition, said that the supplementary estimate should have been presented in the autumn session of the Council and not now. It was but a mockery to present the estimates before the legislature after expenditure had been incurred. Commenting on the details of the estimate, the speaker remarked that the loan of Rs. 1 crore from the Government of India for advances to small jute growers was a great mistake. The Government should have known that most of the small jute growers had already sold their jute and

did not require any advance for deferring sale till the rise in prices. The major portion of the money must be lying idle and yet Government had to pay interest on it. The estimate showed a provision of Rs. 8 lakhs for a vagrants' home and Rs. 53 lakhs for advance to the Director of Civil Supplies for purchase of food-grains as additional grants, but there was no word of explanation or the details of the policy underlying the scheme of control. The demand under Loans and Advances was Rs. 96½ lakhs. This extra expenditure, it was stated, was due mainly to the distribution of agricultural loans on a large scale in areas devastated by the recent cyclone and flood. Such palliative measures, the Khan Bahadur said, would be of no help in the long run. They should have a comprehensive policy regarding agricultural credit instead of giving loans to agriculturists haphazardly. He suggested the establishment of thana agricultural banks in this connexion.

Replying, Mr. P. N. Banerjee, Revenue Minister, said that owing to the abnormal situation prevailing in the province at the time, the question of a large part of the demand arose after the autumn session, and that was why it could not be placed before the House earlier. The provision of Rs 96½ lakhs under the head "Loans and Advances", and Rs. 49 lakhs under "Famine" had been the direct result of cyclone and flood which had devastated the province in October last. The establishment of a Directorate of Civil Supplies and the advance of Rs. 53 lakhs under that head for the purchase of foodgrains was a development which normal human eyes could not foresee. Nor could they anticipate that a liberal scale of dearness allowance had to be granted to their employees. This allowance had been due to factors over which this province or the provincial Government had no control. Referring to the grant regarding the housing of vagrants, the Minister said that the question of control of vagrants had engaged the attention of the Calcutta Rotary Club for years past. The Government proposed to bring forward a Bill providing a home for 5,000 vagrants. The infirm and deceased vagrants would require proper treatment and attempts would be made to find employment for all those who had been cured and cleansed, schools would have to be established for children vagrants and arrangements made for the treatment of the sick. Turning to the demand regarding loans to small jute growers, Mr. Banerjee said that the loans was necessitated by the fact that the prices of jute last year came down considerably. In order to enable small jute growers to hold over their stock until there was a rise in prices, roughly about Rs. 10 lakhs had been advanced. It was discovered later that the prices of jute had gone up and it was no longer necessary to make further advance. The advances were made from funds given by the Central Government who were not insisting on payment of interest. As regards the question of an advance to the Directorate of Civil Supplies, the Minister said that the matter would be dealt with separately and all inquiries would be answered.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

2nd. MARCH :—Sir Bijoy Prosad Singha Roy, ex-Minister, was elected President of the Council to-day. The vacancy was caused by the death Mr. Satyendra Chandra Mitter. Sir Bijoy obtained 29 votes while his rival candidate, Khan Bahadur Abdul Hamid Chowdhury (Deputy President of the Council), secured 25 votes. One vote was rejected. Altogether 55 members participated in the election. Sir Bijoy was the candidate of the Moslem League and the European Group while Khan Bahadur Abdul Hamid Chowdhury belonged to the Progressive Coalition Party.

NON-AGRICULTURAL TENANCY ACT

3rd. MARCH :—The Council sat for half an hour to-day. The business before the House related to the consideration of the bill to amend the Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions Act), 1940, introduced by the Hon. Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Minister. But as the Opposition insisted on having time to put in amendments, the President (Sir B. P. Singha Roy) granted them time to do so till 3 p. m. thursday. The period of the Act in question will expire on Mar 29, 1943. The Bill sought to extend its operation for one year more pending the introduction of a permanent and more comprehensive legislation on the subject.

WASTE LAND RECLAMATION

4th. MARCH :—The Council passed a non-official resolution to-day urging the allotment of "sufficient funds" in the next year's Budget "for small irrigational projects" in E. and N. Bengal "for the purpose of reclaiming cultivable waste

lands." Khan Bahadur *Saiyed Muzzamuddin Hosain* (Leader of the Muslim League Opposition), who initiated the discussion, suggested a provision of Rs. 10 lakhs for the purpose. To this an amendment was moved by Rai Sahib *J. M. Sen* (Progressive Coalition) urging the allotment of "sufficient funds" for the purpose. The House agreed to the amendment.

Replying to the discussion that followed, Khan Bahadur *Hashem Ali Khan*, Minister for Agriculture, observed that the object of the resolution was laudable but the problem was a vast one. There were thousands of acres of lands lying waste in the province, which if made arable would no doubt prove of immense benefit to the people. But it was not possible for this Government or any other Government, even in normal times to tackle this question easily. The Government were however doing something in this respect. They had already had certain schemes one of which aimed at helping district boards in taking up small projects like this. In last year's Budget they had provided Rs. 50,000 for the purpose, and some of the district boards had taken advantage of the Government schemes. Besides this, the Government also distributed loans for excavation of tanks, and in this connexion, Rs. 47,000 was advanced by the Government by way of loan. The resolution was passed as amended. The Council then adjourned till Monday.

SUPPLY & CONTROL OF FOODSTUFFS

8th. MARCH :—The food situation in the country was discussed in the Council when the Leader of the Opposition (*Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hossain*) moved his special motion urging the Government to launch upon a comprehensive scheme for supplying the requirements of the people. The Khan Bahadur moved : "That this Council is of opinion that the measures so far taken by the Government for ensuring supply and control of prices of food, cloth and other necessities of life, have been wholly inadequate and ineffective and urges Government to draw up immediately and implement a comprehensive scheme for supply and control of prices of food and other necessities of life both in urban and rural areas, if necessary, in consultation with the leaders of all parties and other prominent members of both Houses of Legislature who take interest in such matters."

While not minimising the needs of the urban and industrial areas, the Khan Bahadur specially referred to the distress of the poorer section of the people in rural areas and urged that unless steps were taken to save these people, there might have a repetition of the havoc that was caused to the country in the last century when people died in thousands. He asked Government to think out a comprehensive scheme of rationing for the whole of Bengal and not merely of the city and of the industrial areas. The price of rice was rising and he charged the Government with abetting profiteers and hoarders by not fixing a maximum price of rice earlier. If that was done, the poorer section of the people would not have been hit. Giving a constructive suggestion, he said that if the whole of the Government staff in the rural areas was utilised, they could get complete figures for the purpose of introducing card system. In this connexion he offered his services for a time and averred that necessary provisions could be made for a proper rationing. It was high time that the policy of drift should be given up and a comprehensive scheme on a systematic basis should be launched upon and it should be seen that the scheme was given effect to. Otherwise they should lay down their office.

Begum Hamida Momin said that it was an irony of fate that the Chief Minister had shouted that the problem of Bengal was the question of dal and bhat and now they were faced with a serious food situation. There was no indication that Government was anxious to relieve the distress. Rice was selling to-day at Rs. 20 per maund. If that was the position now, what was going to happen in the interval before they got the new crop? Ordinary people did not understand politics. They wanted food and if that was not forthcoming, Government was to be blamed.

Supporting the motion, Mr. *J. McFarlane* said that it was sufficient to say that the food position had been and was still grave and all steps hitherto taken had proved ineffective. The problem of adequate food-stuffs was not peculiar to this country but was common practically in all other countries, and he doubted whether anyone of them had found complete satisfactory solution of it. But with regard to rice, this province had hitherto shown to be more or less self-sufficient. In 1941-42 there was considerable surplus. People generally held that a large stock of food-stuffs existed in the country but they unfortunately in the main appeared to be under the control of profiteers and hoarders and it was dealing with these rather than Government had shown such lamentable weakness. The only method to deal

with them was to confiscate their stocks, fine them, imprison them, all three. It would do no harm to treat them rough. No treatment was too severe to such enemies of society. He hoped Government would adopt this view and broadcast their intentions of dealing mercilessly with these people, and they would find plenty of support if they did it. Let the names of those people who had been found guilty of the crime and the punishment meted out to them be published in the press. Much criticism had been heard, he continued, in regard to the personnel of the Director of Supplies. He asked Government to consider whether it was fair or reasonable to expect that officials, however willing they might be to apply their minds to the new task, should suddenly become possessed of intimate knowledge of business of purchasing and supplying foodstuffs. Was Government satisfied that the essential qualifications, knowledge and experience of business were not to be found outside the rank of the civil service? Finally, he asked for an assurance from Government if they regard dearness allowance as only temporary and unsatisfactory expedient for meeting the high price and they recognised the inherent danger of such allowance, one of which was the danger into the hands of the profiteers.

9th. MARCH :—Mr. *Humayun Kabir* moved an amendment to-day reading: "That for the words "ensuring supply and control of prices of food, cloth and other necessities of life have been wholly inadequate and ineffective and urges Government to draw up immediately and implement a comprehensive scheme for supply and control of prices of food and other necessities of life both in urban and rural areas, if necessary", the following words be substituted :—

"Ensuring supply of food, clothing and other necessities of life at controlled prices requires revision in the light of experience so far gained and urges upon the Government to declare Bengal a deficit province immediately and take such steps as may be necessary for ensuring the supply of a minimum quota of food and other necessities to all persons in rural as well as urban areas."

Mr. Kabir wanted to know whether Government had been advised that Bengal might very soon face a serious situation of famine and whether it was not a fact that the export of rice was going on from this province. He criticised the wisdom of giving news about the contemplated introduction of rationing system prematurely which had only the effect of raising prices.

"As the wording of the special motion may imply a vote of censure on the Ministry," the Hon'ble the *Chief Minister* intervened in the debate and said that he was free to admit that the result so far taken to tackle the problem had not proved satisfactory or adequate. From that point of view, without admitting that "we are liable to be censured," they were prepared to announce here and now that they were taking most adequate steps that were possible to be taken in order to meet the emergent situation. If necessary, they were prepared to accept the special motion so long as it was understood that Government did not accept its implications of their failure to deal with the situation. If that was made clear, Government would accept the resolution and take steps on the lines suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. It was not their intention to have the matter talked out and if necessary they would give this House another day, any number of days in order to give suggestions. Government were not going to evade facing the situation arising out of the motion. The was the view of the Government.

In his statement the Hon'ble *Nawab Habibulla Bahadur of Dacca*, Minister for Commerce and Labour said that the provision of foodstuffs at reasonable prices for the people of Bengal had received his closest attention since he took charge of the department. He emphasised that for rice the loss of import from Burma, the denial of boats, the demands for military, the normal commitments to Bihar and Assam, hoarding on a fairly extensive scale had all tended to create local shortages. Except rice, this province was deficient in respect of all other essential food supply, viz, wheat, dal, mustard, sugar and salt and had to depend in varying degrees upon the supplies it could secure from the producing provinces. Thus for wheat Bengal was dependant on the Punjab, for dal and mustard largely on Bihar and the United Provinces, for sugar again on Bihar and on salt for supply from overseas and the West coast of India. In any scheme of controlled distribution, the Minister proceeded, it was necessary that the price at the source should be known and controlled. In almost all the food-stuffs they had to obtain from other provinces this difficulty was experienced. Added to this was the difficulty that no province now appeared to admit that it had surplus in respect of any food-stuffs and they had often to contend with other provincial embargoes on the export of their food-stuffs. "The Government of India", he told the House, "are now evolving

a scheme for control of food-stuffs on an All-India basis. It is hoped that when this scheme is under way we shall receive the share we are entitled to not only on the basis of our large population, our contribution to war effort and industry, but also upon the ground that this province must receive a preference being most exposed to enemy attack."

The Hon'ble Minister then indicated the action taken by the Government in respect of different food-stuffs, kerosene and coal. As regards rice, Government proposed to create and maintain in Calcutta and at principal deficit areas a reserve of paddy or rice. This reserve would not be for consumption but for throwing on the market whenever necessary at moderate prices under a system of free trade. It was obvious that such a reserve could only be obtained on the new crop and a good new crop. Government had their agents now operating in the elected districts and had fixed a ceiling price for purchase. As regards the price control on rice that had already been relaxed on executive instructions to district magistrates not to take action except in cases of gross profiteering, the Minister hoped that they would be able to build up a reserve as intended. Failing this their future policy must depend on whether they could succeed in creating a "bottle neck control" in rice at least in the now dominating market of Calcutta. In this connexion the Minister pointed out that the agency system had been given a go-bye and under the new system there would be only buyer and that was the Government. Under the new system the Government had appointed a food grain officer who along with his officers would purchase rice at a fair and reasonable price. So far as wheat was concerned, the Government of India put the Bengal Government into difficulties by fixing a price of wheat in the primary markets. Recently the Government of India had decontrolled the price but supplies had been coming in only in dribbles. The 3 import of wheat into Calcutta which normally had been 18,000 tons a month had during the last six months totalled only 25,965 tons. In January the supply was as little as 187 tons. He hoped that with the adoption of the new purchase policy by the Government of India the position would improve. With regard to mustard oil, a small stock of oil likely to meet Calcutta's requirements for about 2 weeks was now held on Government account by a leading Calcutta firm. The intention was to use it in case of emergency which might result in the city mills temporarily closing down. The disturbances in last August effected very seriously the supply of *dal* from Bihar. The position had somewhat improved since then. Importers of Bengal who had made large purchases in U. P. had their stocks suddenly immobilized. Their protest to U. P. and the Central Governments yielded no results. On their renewed representation to the Government of India against Bengal's immediate demand of 75,000 maunds, their agents had lately received permit for a little over 2,000 maunds from the Bihar Government, i.e. a little over one day's requirement of Calcutta. As in the case of wheat so this case also demonstrated the futility of attempts to safeguard the supply position of a deficit province without the active assistance or protection from the Centre. He hoped the position would improve with the new policy inaugurated by India Government. In respect of sugar, they might have to revise quotas allotted to different areas and channels of supply but the present scheme, he claimed, had already had the beneficial result of making sugar available in the Calcutta markets. So far as salt was concerned, arrangements had been made with the Government of India to secure vessels to carry the salt cargoes. The present position was that there was 16 lakhs maunds of salt in the Government goda (adequate for two months) and the dealers had an additional supply for about three or four weeks. As regards coal, the problem was essentially one of transport and there was no dearth of coal. Lately an agreement had been reached whereby Bengal had been allotted its own quota of wagons.—Bengal's share being 3600 wagons placed at the disposal of the Director of Civil Supplies. There were still difficulties in as much as the collieries on one excuse or other had been avoiding entering into contracts with the coal dealers to whom Government had allotted wagons and there was still the shortage of total wagons available. With the strong action taken against a very big coal dealer for disobeying the order against retail sale it was hoped that so long wagons continued to be made available the supply for the city would not be allowed to fall short seriously. As regards kerosene, Government had lately prepared a scheme for the distribution throughout the province. Under the scheme the Dt. Magistrate was to be kept fully informed of the dealers selected by the agent of the Oil Companies and of the quota of oil allotted during the month and delivered to approved dealers or consumers during the month. Bengal's quota of Standard cloth for the quarter February-April was 75 lakhs yards. Government propo-

sed distribution in the first instance mainly in the jute growing districts which had not been benefited from an increase in the price of paddy and in the district of Midnapore. The actual distribution would be made through the existing trade channels subject to the supervision and control of the local officer. The provincial Government, he added, had now agreed to bear financial responsibilities for this scheme.

Mr. J. B. Ross, Leader of the European Group, said that there was no doubt that Government had been attempting to tackle the food problem but there was also no doubt that Government had allowed the position to go completely out of hand. The fundamental problem within the province at the time was adequate supply of rice. As regards wheat, they had heard a great deal some three months ago about Government having arranged with the British Government that shiploads of wheat were arriving at Calcutta from Australia to supplement their requirements. But they had not heard anything about the arrival of wheat since then. He thought that if the shipment of wheat materialised, the rice position of the province would be considerably eased. The minister had stated that a Food Grain purchasing officer had been appointed and he and his staff would have the monopoly of purchase of rice of the province. But there were certain forces at work which would prevent him and his officers from carrying out their duties satisfactorily. Mr. Ross referred to the statement made the other day by the minister concerned about the rice position for 1942-43 wherein it was stated that the estimated production of rice was 23 per cent short of their requirements and remarked that a reply of this nature, if correct, must have the effect of aggravating the position. It would inevitably encourage the tendency on the part of the cultivators and the stockists in the rural areas to hoard stocks. If the Government were convinced that the figures given were substantially correct, they should be endeavouring to secure additional supplies from other provinces and seeking the help of the Government of India in this respect. But they had not heard that Government had taken any action in this matter. If, on the other hand, Government considered that the figures about rice were unreliable, it was their duty then to use the whole machinery of administration to ascertain the fact.

DEBATE ON FLOOD COMMISSION REPORT

11th. MARCH :—Non-official resolutions were discussed by the Council when it took up further consideration of the resolution moved by Mr. *Latafat Hussain* asking the Government to take decision without delay on the recommendations of the Flood Commission and give effect to them within the next financial year. Khan Bahadur *Satyed Muzzamuddin Hossain* said that it was imperative on Government to consider seriously what could be done to improve the lot of agriculturists. It would be a crime to sit idle even after getting sufficient material for proceeding with the task of overhauling the whole land revenue structure of Bengal, more suited to the present condition. A conference was convened in July last which was postponed sine die. The agriculturists of the country were now in a desperate condition and Government could at least take decision on the recommendations of the Commission regarding reduction of abnormally high rentals, stoppage of enhancements and imposition of agricultural income tax for improving agriculture. Experiments could also be made as to the best scheme of nationalising lands in small experimental areas. If Government sat idle it could be then rightly charged with culpable negligence.

Replying the Revenue Minister (Hon'ble Mr. *Pramatha Nath Banerjee*) said that the acceptance of the recommendations of the Flood Commission would involve a change in the economic structure of the province. In view of the various difficulties in the way of accepting the recommendations, he agreed that it would be useful for them, for the leaders of the different parties, to meet and give him advice about the practicability of carrying out all or some of the recommendations of the Commission in the altered situation of the country. The Minister admitted that there was an urgent demand by the vast majority of people for something to be done in this matter. He also realised that some change in the economic land system was absolutely essential. He was aware that the land system was too wooden and too anti-diluvian, but the question was one of practicability. They had in front of them the biggest war, and what economic organisation there would be after the war no one knew. They had however to proceed on the present basis. The Minister proposed to give his decision in the matter within the next few days but before he gave his decision he would like to get the co-operation of all sections of the House. He agreed with the view that in abnormal times like this if the

economic structure of the province was to be altered, that alteration should have the willing co-operation of all sections of the communities as far as possible. In that view he proposed shortly to convene a conference of leaders of the different parties to discuss this matter, and he would request the mover not to press his motion.

With the leave of the House, Mr. *Latufat Hussain* withdrew his resolution.

EXPENDITURE ON CIVIL DEFENCE

12th. MARCH :—The Council adopted a non-official resolution to-day urging that 90% of the expenditure on civil defence measures in the province be met from Central revenues. The Government was requested to make a representation to the Government of India. Mr. *Nur Ahmed*, mover of the resolution, and its supporters stressed the need for adequate provision for nation-building departments and said that much money would be available for the purpose if the Government bore a large proportion of the expenditure on civil defence measures in Bengal. The Premier, Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq* expressing his sympathy with the object of the motion said that the Government would forward the proceedings to the proper quarters with their "strongest recommendation." He added that they would welcome the day when they received substantial help in the matter from the Government of India.

IMPROVEMENT OF SAILORS' CONDITION

Mr. *Nur Ahmed* in another resolution asked the Government of India to place at the disposal of the Bengal Government at lump sum of Rs. 50 crores for improving the condition of sailors, seamen, soldiers and non-combatants actively participating in the war effort in Bengal and for the rehabilitation of the families that evacuated from their homes on military ground. The resolution was accepted without opposition.

SALT MANUFACTURE IN BENGAL

The 3rd resolution, moved by the same member and accepted by the House, requested the Government to make an immediate representation to the Government of India to give all reasonable facilities and assistance for developing the manufacture of salt in Bengal. Mr. *U. N. Burman*, Minister for Excise, said that arrangements had been made in certain parts of the 24 Parganas and Midnapore districts for producing salt as a cottage industry. There was no difficulty about that. The Government's scheme for production of the commodity on a big scale was still under the consideration of experts and the Industrial Survey Committee. It had, therefore, not been possible for then to forward the scheme to the Control Government. The Council at this stage adjourned till March 22.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

22nd. MARCH :—The question of rice shortage was again raised when Mr. *U. N. Burman*, Minister on behalf of the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, informed Khan Bahadur *Saiyed Muzzamuddin Hosain*, Leader of the Muslim League Opposition, that the actual deficit was not expected to be more than 10 against which there was the probability of some stock remaining from last year's exceptionally good crop. The total quantity of rice required for consumption could not be accurately estimated, the estimated requirements being based on an average of 344 lbs of rice per capita annually. The crop forecasts together with net imports for 3 years preceding 1942 placed the average resources at about 76 lakhs tons against the average requirements of 92 lakhs tons.

The Government, however, were trying to import from surplus provinces through the Government of India who had inaugurated a scheme of co-ordinated purchase of foodgrains. Along with a scheme of distribution which was now under consideration these supplies were expected to reduce the deficit to a minimum. In the light of latest information it might be stated that imports were expected at once in substantial quantities and special arrangements were being made by the Central Government to expedite it. It would not be in public interest to disclose the figures. The imported rice would benefit not only Calcutta but also other deficit districts.

Later, during the resumed debate on the special motion of Khan Bahadur *Muazzamuddin Hosain* about the food situation, Mr. *Nur Ahmed* (Muslim League) emphasized the seriousness of the position and urged the Government to take immediate steps to bring relief to the sufferers.

Mr. *Hamidul Huq Chowdhury* (Muslim League) accused the Ministry of not paying sufficient attention to the food question. He said that if a well-thought-out

scheme had been adopted in 1942, the present crisis might have been averted. He had not concluded when the Council adjourned.

23rd. MARCH :—The four-day debate on the food situation in the Province concluded this afternoon when the House, by 16 to 15 votes, passed a Government party member's amendment on the subject. The substantive motion of the Opposition (Muslim League), which expressed the opinion that measures so far taken by the Government for ensuring supplies and control of prices of food, cloth and other necessities of life have been "wholly inadequate and ineffective", was lost without a division. The European Group voted with the Muslim League against the amendment and of the three members of the official Congress Party present in the House, two voted with the Government Party for the amendment and the third remained neutral. The amendment expressed the view that measures so far taken by the Government for ensuring supply of food, cloth and other necessities of life at controlled prices required revision in the light of experience so far gained and urged the Government to declare Bengal a deficit province immediately and take such steps as might be necessary for ensuring the supply of a minimum quota of food and other necessities to all persons in rural as well as urban areas. Replying to the debate, Mr. P. N. Banerjee, Minister in charge of Civil Supplies, said that he would accept the Opposition motion if its "censure portion" was left out. He announced that the Government of India had expressed its willingness to help Bengal in every possible way and food grains had got started coming to Calcutta for the purpose of replenishing supplies in the city. He further informed the House that the Government would soon consider the question of introducing rationing system in Calcutta. The Council at this stage adjourned till the 2nd. April but in view of the development regarding the political deadlock in the Assembly and the Governor's proclamation subsequently, no meeting was held on this day and the House adjourned *sine die*.

The Assam Legislative Assembly

LIST OF MEMBERS

- THE HON'BLE MR. BASANTA KUMAR DAS, B.L.—Speaker**
MAULVI MUHAMMAD AMIRUDDIN—Deputy Speaker
1. RAJA AJIT NARAYAN DEB, OF SIDLI
 2. BABU AKSHAY KUMAR DAS
 3. MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA
 4. MR. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE
 5. BABU BALARAM SIRCAR
 6. THE HON'BLE MR. BASANTA KUMAR DAS
 7. SRIJUT BELIRAM DAS
 8. SRIJUT BEPIN CHANDRA MEDHI
 9. BABU BIPIN BEHARI DAS
 10. SRIJUT BISHNU RAM MEDHI
 11. BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI
 12. SRIJUT DEBESWAR SARMAH
 13. SRIJUT GHANASHYAM DAS
 14. SRIJUT GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR
 15. SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI
 16. SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN
 17. BABU HARENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI
 18. THE HON'BLE SRIJUT HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY
 19. SRIJUT JADAV PRASAD CHALIHA
 20. SRIJUT JOGENDRA CHANDRA NATH
 21. SRIJUT JOGENDRA NARAYAN MANDAL
 22. SRIJUT JOGES CHANDRA GOHAIN
 23. BABU KALACHAND ROY
 24. SRIJUT KAMESWAR DAS
 25. BABU KAMINI KUMAR SEN
 26. BABU KARUNA SINDHU ROY
 27. MR. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN
 28. SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMAH
 29. SRIJUT LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH
 30. BABU LALIT MOHAN KAR
 31. SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA
 32. THE HON'BLE DR. MAHENDRA NATH SAIKIA
 33. SRIJUT MAHI CHANDRA BORA
 34. THE HON'BLE MR. NABA KUMAR DUTTA
 35. BABU NIRENDRA NATH DEV
 36. SRIJUT OMEO KUMAR DAS
 37. SRIJUT PARAMANANDA DAS
 38. SRIJUT PURANDAR SARMA
 39. SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA
 40. BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA
 41. RAI SAHIB DAULAT CHANDRA GOHAIN
 42. SRIJUT RAJENDRA NATH BARUA
 43. SRIJUT RAM NATH DAS
 44. SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI
 45. SRIJUT SANKAR CHANDRA BARUA
 46. SRIJUT SANTOSH KUMAR BARUA
 47. SRIJUT SARVESWAR BARUA
 48. BABU SHIBENDRA CHANDRA BISWAS
 49. SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA
 50. SRIJUT SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN
 51. MAULAVI ABDUL AZIZ
 52. MAULAVI ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY
 53. MAULANA ABDUL HAMID KHAN
 54. KHAN BAHADUR HAZI ABDUL MAJID CHAUDHURY
 55. THE HON'BLE MAULAVI ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY
 56. MAULAVI ABDUR RAHMAN
 57. MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF
 58. MAULAVI MD. ABDUS SALAM
 59. KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY
 60. MAULAVI MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN
 61. MAULAVI DEWAN ALI RAJA
 62. KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUHAMMAD AMIRUDDIN
 63. MAULAVI MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI
 64. MAULAVI ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY
 65. MAULAVI BADARUDDIN AHMED
 66. KHAN BAHADUR DEWAN EKIMUR ROZA CHAUDHURY
 67. MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED
 68. MAULAVI GHYASUDDIN AHMED
 69. MAULAVI JAHANUDDIN AHMED
 70. KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI KERAMAT ALI
 71. MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY
 72. KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI
 73. MAULAVI MATIOR RAHMAN MIA
 74. MAULAVI MABARAK ALI
 75. THE HON'BLE KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI
 76. KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MUFIZUR RAHMAN
 77. THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI
 78. MAULAVI MUZARROF ALI LASKAR
 79. MAULAVI NAMWAR ALI BARBHUIYA
 80. MAULAVI NAZIRUDDIN AHMED
 81. MAULAVI SHEIKH OSMAN ALI SADAGAR
 82. THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA
 83. THE HON'BLE KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI SAYIDUR RAHMAN
 84. SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MUHAMMAD WAHEED
 85. Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT

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| 86. MR. N. DAWSON | 98. MR. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN |
| 87. MR. E. H. S. LEWIS | 99. SRIJUT DHIRSING DEURI |
| 88. MR. D. B. H. MOORE | 100. REV. L. GATPHOH |
| 89. MR. C. W. MORLEY | 101. MR. C. GOLDSMITH |
| 90. MR. R. A. PALMER | 102. MR. JOBANG D. MARAK |
| 91. DR. C. G. TERRELL | 103. REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY |
| 92. MR. P. TRINKLE | 104. SRIJUT KARKA DALAY MIBI |
| 93. MR. A. WHITTAKER | 105. SRIJUT KHORSING TERANG, |
| 94. THE HON'BLE MISS MAVIS DUNN | MAUZADAR |
| B. T., B. L. | 106. SRIJUT RABI CHANDRA KACHARI |
| 95. MR. BENJAMIN CH. MOMIN | 107. THE HON'BLE SRIJUT RUPNATH |
| 96. SRIJUT BHAIKAB CHANDRA DAS | BRAHMA |
| 97. SRIJUT BIDESHI PAN TANTI | 108. BABU SANAT KUMAR AHIR |

Proceedings of the Assembly

Budget Session—Shillong—8th to 27th. March 1943

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

The Budget session of the Assam Legislative Assembly commenced at Shillong on the 8th. MARCH 1943 with the Hon'ble Sj. *Basanta Kumar Das*, Speaker in the chair.

Introducing the Budget for the year 1943-44, Mr. *Abdul Matin Choudhury*, Finance Minister disclosed an estimated revenue deficit of Rs. 10,10,000.

The year 1943-44 starts with an estimated opening balance of Rs. 76,39,000. Receipts are estimated at Rs. 10,40,08,000 (Revenue Receipts Rs. 3,64,20,000 and Capital Receipts Rs. 6,75,88,000.) The estimated expenditure has been taken at Rs. 10,73,18,000 (Revenue Expenditure Rs. 3,72,29,000 and Capital Expenditure Rs. 7,00,89,000 thus leaving a closing surplus balance of Rs. 43,29,000.

The Revenue Budget shows a deficit which is estimated at Rs. 8,09,000. This again does not reveal the true position as it includes (1) Rs. 1,00,000 on account of Collective Fines and (2) Rs. 18,90,000 less Rs. 17,89,000 shown on the expenditure side or Rs. 1,01,000 net on account of Receipts from the Motor Transport Organisation, the expenditure on which except for the recurring charges is debitable to the Capital Head 55B. The result is that the real revenue deficit is estimated to be Rs. 10,10,600.

Mr. Choudhury said that war conditions still pervaded the atmosphere and problems brought in their train still continued to influence and determine the policy of the Government.

The food situation, he added, was absorbing the anxious thought of the Government and provision had been made for an increased expenditure on the "grow more food" campaign and for bringing more land under cultivation.

Turning to the Budget proper he said that according to the revised estimate for 1942-43 a revenue deficit of Rs. 9,52,000 was anticipated but the real deficit was not likely to be more than Rs. 2,42,000. The Budget estimate for 1943-44 anticipated a revenue deficit of Rs. 10,10,000.

Mr. *Rohini Kumar Choudhury*, Leader of the Opposition sought to move an adjournment motion over the Jorhat jail disturbance on Feb. 24. But *Sir Md. Saadulla*, the Premier having stated that a judicial inquiry by the Deputy Commissioner of Jorhat was proceeding the motion was not pressed.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

10th. MARCH :—The general discussion on the Budget began in the Assembly today. Mr. *Baidynath Mookherjee* criticized the Government for the lack of any well-thought-out plan for improving the conditions of the people. Judging from the poor attendance of members, he said the Assembly was no longer representative of the people and as such he appealed to the Governor either to dissolve the House and order fresh elections or suspend the constitution. He referred to the rising prices of foodstuffs and criticized the Government's policy of price control as ineffective. Mr. *Rohini Kumar Choudhury* urged the need for adequate provision

for families of security prisoners. Mr. *Arnold Whittaker*, leader of the European Group, after congratulating the Government on estimating a deficit of only Rs. 10 lakhs in a province now situated in a theatre of war, said that unless new sources of revenue were found to cover war-time windfalls, the province would be faced with deficits after the war, and there would be a shrinkage, instead of expansion of nation-building activities. Mr. *Magbul Hussain Chowdhury* asked for suspension of the collection of agricultural loans in distress areas in the Surma Valley. Mr. *Abdur Rahman* said that the supply and price control policies of the Government were a failure.

11th. MARCH :—The Budget debate in the Assembly concluded today. Two members from the Congress group out of four present in the House participated in the discussion. Mr. *C. Goldsmith* said that freedom from want would solve 99% of the problems of the people of Assam. The time was not opportune for the taking up of big objects. If the people were kept contented, it would help the war effort indirectly. Replying to the debate, the Premier *Sir Muhammad Saadulla* said that his Ministry was not responsible for the arrest of MLA's in the Province. Criticisms of the National War Front Movement were based on civil information or misinformation. The movement had justified its existence. Regarding the treatment of prisoners in jails, *Sir Muhammad* remarked that those who wanted home comforts in jail were mistaken. He indicated the steps taken in the matter of allowances to security prisoners and assured the House that each case would be carefully considered. Referring to the loss sustained by the Government, local bodies and private persons as a result of arson and looting during the past few months, the Premier asked his critics whose creed was non-violence whether any words of condemnation were forthcoming from them against these acts of sabotage. Mr. *Dakshina Gupta* (Congress) said that individual liberty and individual freedom of speech and action had been denied to all and the Press had been gagged. "Suppression of normal life and suppression of news was the order of the day," said Mr. Gupta. He asked the Premier to shake off his "peacock's feathers" lent by the bureaucracy and follow the only honourable course which Mr. *Alla Bux* and Dr. *Syamaprosad Mukherjee* have followed.

COURT OF WARDS BILL

12th. MARCH :—The Assembly today passed the Assam Court of Wards (Amendment) Bill of 1941 and considered the Shillong Execution of Decrees Bill, 1943 and the Shillong Attachment of Salaries Bill, 1943.

NURSES' REGISTRATION BILL

13th. MARCH :—The Assembly today passed the consideration stage of the Assam Nurses' Midwives' and Health Visitors' Registration Bill. Mr. *Arnold Whittaker*, leader of the European Group, expressed satisfaction that the Bill was an all-party measure and had emerged from the select committee in an improved form. Dr. *C. G. Terrell* said that the Bill, if passed into law, would fulfil a long-felt want in the province. He expressed gratitude to the Shillong Welsh Mission Hospital for having shouldered the responsibility for training nurses at present, and hoped that this legislation will encourage the starting of additional training centres.

ALLEGED POLICE EXCESSES

Mr. *Rohini Choudhury* asked leave to move an adjournment motion to consider the situation arising out of alleged indiscriminate house-searches, arrests and assaults and detention of a large number of people in Gaubati Jail, in certain villages in Nalbari Thana from the 2nd to 9th March last by way of what he described as a reprisal, being unable to detect the offenders responsible for stealing six guns from licence-holders. *Sj. Choudhury* said that about or more than 200 men of the Nalbari Thana went to different villages. There was no warrant of arrest against any particular individual and there was no mention of any house, where the search was to take place, because nobody could say who had stolen the guns. Almost every house was searched and nothing incriminating was found. People, who raised a single word of protest was arrested, handcuffed and sometimes assaulted and were brought to Gaubati. People, against whom there was no evidence, were arrested and put into jail simply on suspicion. Bail petitions were moved, they were rejected. Some villagers, through fear, ran away from villages. The occurrences of assault took place in 14 villages. *Sj. Choudhury* said that on the 3rd March, 44 persons were still detained in jail.

The Premier, *Sir Md. Saadulla*, replying, said that the motion was out of order. *Sj. Choudhury* should have come with this motion on the first day but

instead he came to-day after the House sat for one week. The Premier explained the circumstances necessitating the sending out of raid parties to these areas where persons impersonating as policemen in Khaki dress had been terrorising the people and in fact took away six licensed guns from Nalbari by false impersonification. Similar methods, he added, had been adopted previously too in Nowgong where 17 guns were stolen out of which 16 were since recovered. He said that the searches were made not to terrorise people, but to maintain law and order. Continuing, Sir Md. Saadullah stated that 22 persons, wanted in other connections, were arrested from Nalbari in the course of the searches there. He said that there was no case of assault by the Police.

Sj. Choudhury did not press the motion, when he was assured by the Premier that in future he would see that a big police force would be accompanied by a Magistrate.

BLACK MARKET ACTIVITIES

15th. MARCH :—Questions relating to black market activities in the province were raised in the Assembly today on a cut motion moved by Mr. *Baidyanath Mookerjee* under general administration. Mr. *F. H. S. Lewis* recommended severe punishment to people connected with such activities. Dr. *C. G. Terrell* said that the price of quinine in the black market was many times more than the Government price. Sir *Mahammad Saadulla*, Premier, replying said that there was no black market for quinine in Assam and that Government had taken steps to provide quinine at as fair a price as possible. Referring to the supply problem, he said that Government has been doing its utmost to secure essential foodstuffs, such as dal, atta, flour, mustard oil and kerosene. Mr. *Karunasindhu Roy* (Congress) suggested the opening of Government shops in all rural areas for a fair distribution of foodstuffs. The House ultimately passed demands under the heads general administration and revenue and civil defence.

18th. MARCH :—The Assembly today passed all demands for grants under police, public health, education (other than European) and medical. The cut motions were either lost or withdrawn. Moving a cut motion under public health, Mr. *Baidyanath Mukherjee* criticized Government policy of giving inadequate grant to this department. He condemned the present dual control under which public health officers had to work in districts. He suggested that these officers should be brought under the control of Assistant Directors of Public Health instead of the present arrangement of being under Civil Surgeons. He complained that the number of dispensaries was inadequate and the stock of medicine meagre. Maulvi *Abdur Rahman*, Maulvi *Amjad Ali* and Mr. *Narendra Nath Dey* also criticized the working of the department in certain matters. Replying Miss *Mavis Dunn*, Minister, Public Health, said the question of the reorganization of the Public Health department was under the consideration of the Government. Mr. *Mookerjee's* cut motion was lost and the original demand passed.

When the House discussed medical grants, Mr. *D. B. H. Moore* referred to the inadequate supply of quinine.

SECURITY PRISONERS IN ASSAM

The number of security prisoners detained in different jails in Assam was approximately 227 and amongst them only sixteen were getting family or personal allowance—thus said Mr. *Rupnath Brahma*, Judicial Minister, replying to a question of Mr. *Kamini Kumar Sen* (Ex-Minister) today during the interpellation period. The Minister added that orders had been passed for grant of allowances in other cases and those were constantly increasing. Being asked on what basis the amount of such allowance was fixed, Mr. *Brahma* said that it was fixed on a consideration of what was strictly necessary to maintain the family in view of its numbers and ordinary habit of living.

Stating the policy of releasing the Security prisoners, Mr. *Brahma* said that Government were prepared to release those who would give an undertaking to abstain from in any way promoting the activities of any movement which aimed at the sub-version of Government if their undertaking could be trusted. In the matter of release the Deputy Commissioners used their discretion and the Minister expressed his inability to inform the exact number of prisoners released in pursuance of this policy. But he stated that some 30 had already been released.

Regarding the policy adopted by the Government in the granting of parole to political prisoners, Mr. *Brahma* said : "Government are not ordinarily prepared to grant parole since little reliance can be placed on persons who are not prepared to give a general undertaking to be of good behaviour in the respect already indicated,

but desire release for particular private ends. Release on mere parole is therefore confined to cases of proved necessity where reliance can also be placed on honourable observance of the conditions which must necessarily as a rule be stated by "writing".

THE FINANCE BILL 1943

22nd. MARCH:—The Assembly today passed the Shillong (Execution of Decrees) Bill, Shillong Attachment of Salaries Bill, and the Assam Finance Bill, 1943.

The Finance Bill imposes taxation at the current year's rates under the Agricultural Income Tax Act, 1939. The Execution of Decrees Bill provides legal machinery for the purpose from British courts to Khasi State territory and vice versa. By the Attachment of Salaries Bill the basic salary exempted is raised to from Rs. 40 to Rs. 100.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

23rd. MARCH:—The Assembly to-day passed supplementary demands for grants for 1942-43 under various heads amounting to Rs. 69,36,843. All cut motions were either lost or withdrawn. During the debate several members urged suggestion of the realization of agricultural loans in Surma Valley.

Maulavi *Manawar Ali*, Revenue Minister said that orders had been issued not to use coercion but persuasion in realizing loans. The dual control of the Public Health Department was criticized by several members when grants for the department were discussed. Replying *Sir Muhammad Saadulla*, Premier said that the separation of the Public Health and Medical Departments was a complicated problem. He, however, assured the House that prompt measures had been taken to deal with malaria.

SURPLUS RICE IN ASSAM

27th. MARCH:—Assam would have a rice surplus of approximately five million maunds (5,000,000)—this was disclosed by the Premier, *Sir Muhammad Saadullah* today. *Sir Muhammad* said that to keep this surplus in stock would be depriving many hungry mouths of food in other provinces. He reminded the House of the situation in Bengal, as a result of shortage of rice, and said that on the suggestion of the Government of India the Assam Government has agreed to send 5,000 tons of rice to Bengal. In this respect his Government was not guided by any mercenary motive, but simply on humanitarian considerations. Dealing with the question of export, *Sir Muhammad* said that whatever quantity the province could afford to export would go to the Government of India. The Premier appealed to the members to forget all their differences and rise equal to the occasion in extending their whole-hearted co-operation. The statement was made in the course of the four hours' debate on the economic situation in the province. The House then adjourned.

The Assam Legislative Council

Budget Session—Shillong—9th. to 13th. March 1943

RICE POSITION IN ASSAM

9th. MARCH:—The Council today passed the Goalpara Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, the Sylhet Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, and the Assam Moneylenders' Bill, as passed during the last session by the Assembly on amendments suggested by the Governor.

A statement on the rice position in Assam was made by *Sir Muhammad Saadulla*, Premier replying to a debate raised through a resolution moved by *Mr. Satyendra Mohan Lahiri* who urged stoppage of export of rice from the province.

The Premier said that he estimated a surplus of about 2,100,000 maunds of rice of which 1,400,000 maunds are to be allotted for military requirements and for labourers in Assam and the rest would be kept in reserve for any emergency. It would be costly, he added, to undertake any statistical investigation into rice crops as advised by the mover. He also stated that the Government of India had asked the Assam Government to give the province's marketable surplus for the benefit of other deficit provinces. He, however, added that at present rice exports outside the province were prohibited.

Mr. Sarat Chandra Bhattacharyya requested the Government not to allow exports of rice until the next crop was harvested. The resolution was withdrawn.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

12th. MARCH :—The Council to-day concluded discussion on the Budget. Replying on the debate Khan Bahadur *Moulvi Saiyidur Rahman*, Minister for Education, said that the Government would consider the criticisms made by members. Regarding land revenue remission the Government, he said, had decided to stop it unless there was flood, pestilence or famine to justify remission. The Government was fully alive to the problem of food and cloth supply and hoped to meet the situation through its supply department. Nothing would be done by the Ministry to jeopardize the province's food supply. Referring to dearness allowance for primary school teachers, the Minister said that the responsibility rested with local bodies.

At yesterday's meeting some members criticized the mass literacy campaign of Government and suggested that the money spent for the campaign be devoted to an extension and improvement of primary education.

The need for more subsidised dispensaries in the countryside was pointed out by Mr. *H. Emblen*, Leader of the European Group. He also referred to the "grow more food" campaign and said: "Last year Government inaugurated a "grow more food" campaign with gratifying results; but just what it actually meant in terms of maunds of foodstuffs produced is the problem at Calcutta. The present situation emphasises the need for more up-to-date and accurate methods of assessing the total crop production of foodstuffs in the province." He pointed out the necessity of bringing waste land under cultivation and advised Government to make a small grant on all new land brought into cultivation. He also advised Government to obtain from the Government of India a substantial grant for opening up new land. He thought that the cultivation of tobacco might be taken up with profit both to Government and to educated young men. Government should arrange for the training of a few young men in the cultivation of tobacco. In conclusion he said that Government should from now think of the post-war reconstruction problems of the province. In this connexion he stressed the necessity of modernization of the provincial road transport system and improvement of village roads.

Maulvi Abdul Majeed Choudhury referred to the deplorable condition of non-Government schools and said that suitable grants be given them. He advised Government to start dispensaries at suitable places for the treatment of poor village people.

Mr. *Bhimbor Deori* said that Government was not justified in stopping remission of land revenue. He criticized the mass literacy campaign.

Rai Bahadur *Hem Chandra Dutt* said that the nation-building departments were not well looked after. He requested Government to improve the condition of primary school teachers on the lines of the suggestions made by the Sargent Committee.

Mr. *W. R. Gawthrop* (European Group) said that on account of the grant of Rs. 32 lakhs from the Central Government, budgetary problems in Assam were not so difficult as might have been expected, but Government should prepare for the day when such income would no longer be available. He stressed the importance of adopting a courageous financial policy of expansion and reconstruction for post-war years, otherwise Government might have to curtail even the few nation-building activities that existed at present.

Khan Sahib *Maulavi Abdur Rahim Chaudhury* said the Government's "grow more food" campaign could not be successful because there was a heavy cattle mortality in the countryside and cultivators were not in a position to purchase cattle.

Mr. *Satyendra Mohan Lahiry* said that the outturn of the rice was likely to fall in Assam and outside import was not likely. It was therefore necessary to increase production by bringing waste land under cultivation and by the grant of improved seeds and good manure.

Mr. *Jogendra Nath Gohain* suggested that the mass literacy campaign should be merged in general education.

13th. MARCH :—The Council to-day passed the Maternity Benefits Bill, the Forest (Amendment) Bill and the Temporarily Settled Districts Tenancy (Amendment) Bill and then prorogued.

List of Members

RAJA BAHADUR SRI RAMA CHANDRA
 MARDARAJA DEO
 RAI BAHADUR MANDHATA GORACHAND
 PATNAIK
 SRI GOVINDA PRODHAN
 SRI PUNYA NAIKO
 SIR DIBAKARA PATNAIK
 SRI RAMACHANDRA DEBO
 VYSYARAJU KASI VISWANADHAM RAJU
 THE HON'BLE CAPTAIN MAHARAJA SRI
 SRI SRI KRISHNA CHANDRA GAYAPATI
 NARAYAN DEO
 SRI SADASIWA TRIPATHY
 SRI RADHAMOHAN SAHU
 SRI RADHAKRISHNA BISWASROY
 KHAN BAHADUR SAYID AHMAD BAKSH
 KHAN SAHIB SAYID FAZLE HAQUE
 THE HON'BLE MAULAVI ABDUS SOBBAN
 KHAN
 MAULAVI MUHAMMAD LATIFUR RAHMAN
 SRIMATI SARALA DEVI
 MRS. A. LAKSHMI BAI
 MR. PREMANAND MOHANTY
 SRI RANG LAL MODI
 SRI BRAJA SUNDAR DAS
 RAJA KRISHNA CHANDRA MANSINGH
 HARICHANDAN MARDARAJA
 BHIRAMARBAR RAI
 SRI PYARI SANKAR ROY
 REV. E. M. EVANS.
 MR. HARI PANI JENNAH
 SRI BALABHADRA NARAYAN
 SAMANTHARROY
 SRI RADHA MOHAN PANDA

Budget Session—Cuttack—25th. February to 24th. March 1943

The Orissa Legislative Assembly commenced its Budget Session at Outrack on the 5th. February 1943 and passed the Weights and Measures Bill and the State Aid to Industries Amendment Bill, as amended by the Select Committee and adjourned till March 1 when *Pandit Godavaris Misra*, the Finance Minister, presented the budget. Only one member was present on the opposition bench.

1st. MARCH :—A deficit of Rs. 3.81 lakhs in the Budget Estimates for 1943-44 was disclosed by *Pt. Godavaris Misra*, Finance Minister, in presenting the Budget this morning. He said, however, that subsequent information had been received from the Government of India that on account of the province's share in income-tax it would get Rs. 80,000 more than that provided in the revised

Budget for 1942-43 and Rs. 120,000 more than that provided in the Budget for 1943-44. The deficit would thus be reduced to Rs. 1.81 lakhs.

In the revised estimates for 1942-43, revenue is estimated at Rs. 218.92 lakhs and expenditure on revenue account at Rs. 225.65 lakhs. The year's revenue deficit is, therefore, expected to be Rs. 6.73 lakhs. The balance in the Government account which was Rs. 21.18 lakhs at the beginning of the year was, therefore, likely to fall by Rs. 6.73 lakhs at the close of the year. The year 1942-43 which opened with a cash balance of Rs. 39.01 lakhs is expected to close with a balance of Rs. 26.19 lakhs.

According to the Budget estimates for 1943-44, the total revenue is put at Rs. 212.21 lakhs against Rs. 218.92 lakhs in the revised estimate. Thus, there is a drop of Rs. 6.71 lakhs.

The Budget provides for expenditure on revenue account at Rs. 216.07 lakhs against Rs. 225.65 lakhs in the revised estimate for 1942-43.

Outside the revenue account the Budget anticipates a receipt of Rs. 5,02.56 lakhs and an expenditure of Rs. 497.61 lakhs, which gives a surplus Rs. 4.95 lakhs.

Under Civil Defence, a separate cadre of Civil Defence officers has been sanctioned which will comprise civil defence officers, assistant civil defence officers and ARP inspectors and sub-inspectors. The existing staff of ARP officers will be absorbed in the cadre. The total estimated cost of the scheme is Rs. 109 lakhs. To afford training facilities to various ARP personnel within the province, a provincial ARP training school has been opened at Cuttack with 1 deputy director at its head and 5 instructors.

The number of paid personnel of wardens, first aiders and rescue services has been considerably increased. Provision of Rs. 3 lakhs has been made on account of their remuneration.

All this does not however show, said the Finance Minister, that air raids are impending. There are on the contrary distinct indications that possibilities of air raids are more remote now than sometime ago.

Referring to the problems of unification between the 2 parts of this province which came from Bihar and Madras, Pt Misra said that diversity has existed in a number of things. Government have, however, laid down a policy of bringing about unification. Thus the Stamp Act has been unified, a unified Forest Bill has been introduced in this Assembly; constant process of blending is going on by the transfer of officers from one part to the other; recently steps have been taken to bring about complete fusion in the educational sphere.

The syllabuses in the 2 halves of the province at the school final and the matriculation stages have been unified. The courses of study for the secondary school leaving certificate examination in S. Orissa have except for Telugu, been made exactly the same as those prescribed for the matriculation examination of Patna University. The interests of the Telugu students have been adequately safeguarded. With the inauguration of an Orissa University the educational bifurcation between the 2 halves of this province will finally disappear. The Orissa University Act will further consolidate the long-existing relation between the Orissa States and the British districts of Orissa. So far as national aspirations are concerned, there is hardly any difference between the States and the British districts. Both have one language, one literature and one culture. Each forms an inseparable part of one united nation.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

3rd. MARCH:—The Budget proposals were discussed in the Assembly today. Initiating the debate *Srimati Sarala Devi* criticized the present policy of the Government in regard to the export of rice from the province and said that while there was deficiency in the province the Government were allowing the export of rice. She also criticized the Government's excise and education policies.

Criticizing the policy of co-education in the primary stage approved by the Government, Mr. *Latifur Rahman* said that he saw in this policy indirect coercion on the Muslims to give up the purdah.

The *Raja Bahadur of Khallikote* feared that with profiteering and hoarding and with the exports allowed by the Government to other provinces, from May or June onwards there would be very little gain left in the province for local consumption. He reminded the Government that the next harvest would not be ready until December next.

Replying on the debate, *Pandit Godavaris Misra*, Finance Member, referred to the rice situation and said that although Orissa was known to be a surplus

province because of the annual exports from the province in the past, it has not been definitely ascertained whether it was a surplus province or not. Figures are now being collected. The Government of India had, he said, advocated a certain policy not only for controlling export and import of foodstuffs but for distributing the entire output in the country between the exporting and importing and between the surplus and deficit provinces. The Central Government relied mostly on the provincial Governments for the success of the schemes which they were going to enforce.

LATHI CHARGE IN BERRHAMPORE JAIL

16th. MARCH :—Replying to a question by *Srimati Sarala Devi*, Hon. *Mulavi Sobhan Khan* stated that a detachment of armed reserve was taken to the district jail at Berhampore on November 15 which made a short lathi charge on the political prisoners there as a result of which some political prisoners sustained injuries of a simple nature on their persons. This was done as the prisoners became unruly. The Minister further stated that a case of arson was registered in regard to the burning of the contents of a P. W. D. shed adjacent to the jail and circumstances indicated that either political or security prisoners of that jail might have been responsible, but no conclusive evidence was forthcoming. The District Magistrate of Ganjam made an enquiry among the jail staff in his administrative capacity but no report was prepared by the District Magistrate.

After question time, *Pandit Godavaris Misra*, Finance Minister presented the supplementary demands for grants for the year 1941-43. He also presented the report of the Public Accounts Committee relating to the appropriation accounts for 1939-40.

LEGISLATORS UNDER DETENTION

17th. MARCH :—The question as to whether Section 68(4) of the India Government Act regarding the vacation of seats in the provincial legislature applies to a case of voluntary absence of a member or whether it applies to cases where the absence is involuntary, that is "as occasioned by the absence of a member by events beyond his control, such as detention in jail under the Defence Rules" came up for consideration today. Mr. *Mukunda Prasad Das*, Speaker, raising the question to-day, said that Mr. Mohandas who did not attend meetings of the Assembly for a period exceeding 60 days apparently on account of detention under the Defence Rules, and some other members who had not attended meetings of the Assembly for different periods for the same reason, had applied for permission to be absent from meetings of the Assembly. Mr. Das concluded: "Before arriving at a definite decision in the matter of correct interpretation of Section 68 (4) of the Act, the Chair would like to have the views of some of the members including the Leader of the House. It is needless to add that a very important constitutional question like this which affects the rights and privileges of members of the House will be approached by the members in a dispassionate spirit." The Speaker fixed March 25 to hear them on the point.

TACTICS OF THE MINISTRY

24th. MARCH :—Strong criticism of the spirit in which democracy was worked out in the Orissa Province was made by the *Raja Bahadur of Khallikote*, speaking on a cut motion to the demand under "General Administration" today. He said that the constitution had been worked by the previous Ministry as well as the present in a "spirit of vindictiveness and adventurism."

As for the working of Provincial Autonomy in the Province, the *Raja Bahadur* said there was no parallel to it in any of the democracies of the world. The total strength of the House was 59, excluding the Speaker. Nineteen of the members, because they happened to be in opposition, "have been safely lodged behind prison bars under the all-embracing sections of the Defence of India Rules without any trial. The remaining twelve members of the majority party as a protest are not attending the Assembly except when it suits them quietly to step in to sign the attendance register lest they should lose their membership. With the majority of the members disposed of in this convenient way, the majority party is carrying on the administration in the name of the people of the province and democracy and under the auspices of the Government of India Act."

The *Raja Bahadur* referred to the occasion when the House was adjourned for want of a quorum and at another time when a time of 30 minutes was allowed to "enable the Ministerialists to muster even this minimum strength of ten" and said: "There cannot be a greater mutilation of democracy or Provincial Autonomy

as it exists in this province, and it is indeed an example or a model that should be incorporated in the famous Atlantic Charter." He concluded : "After all, Provincial Autonomy has failed in six provinces out of eleven in India. What does it matter if we acknowledge the fact and say that it has failed in tiny Orissa also instead of permitting this unreal and artificial atmosphere to continue any more ?

LEGISLATORS UNDER DETENTION

25th. MARCH :—The Advocate-General was present in the Assembly today to give his opinion on the question whether Sec 68 (4) of the Government of India Act about vacation of seats for absence from the Assembly for 60 days applies to the voluntary absence only of a member, or whether it also applies to cases whether absence is involuntary i. e. as occasioned by absence of a member by events beyond his control such as detention in jail under the DI Rules.

Mr. *Mukunda Prasad Das*, the Speaker, pointed out that in the Constitutions of the Dominions in the British Empire—Canada, New Zealand and Australia—a different phraseology was used. In these Constitutions, he said, the word 'fails to attend' were used in the place of 'is absent' used in the present Government of India Act. To him it appeared that in India, having regard to the peculiar position and the struggle for independence, a definitely different word was used.

The *Advocate General* quoted portions of a number of judgments of the Privy Council as well as of the India High Courts to prove whether the word "absent" implies voluntary absence only or absence for any reason whatsoever.

He said that all the dictionaries gave the meaning for the word "absent" as "not present", "being away", and so on, and not "keeping away". Now, he added, any person who was not present in the Assembly was absent. Nothing else was required. If in Australia or Canada a different language was used, it was with a view to declaring the seat automatically vacant.

The *Speaker* then read out a letter received from Mr. Mohan Das, dated February 7, 1942, in which he said that the Governor had notified the session of the Assembly which called for his attendance. He was detained in the Berhampur jail without trial under an executive order of the Government. He also said that he was prepared to attend even under police escort. He wanted the Speaker also to bring this "serious and unconstitutional" position to the knowledge of the House and said that if he was not present his absence was involuntary and unintentional.

The *Raja Bahadur of Khallikote* said that the member could not be deemed to have been absent as the Government "has closed the doors of this House against him." It was open to the Government to detain him inside the precincts of the House. He wondered if members, who were kept under detention, could even apply for permission as laid down in Rule 33 (4) of the Assembly Rules.

Mr. *B. N. Das*, Deputy Leader of the Congress Party, held that the section should not apply to cases where absence was involuntary due to detention under the DI Rules. He said that Mr. Mohan Das had written to the Speaker to make arrangements so that he might attend the Assembly even under detention. No arrangements had been made.

The *Maharaja of Parlakimedi*, Leader of the House, said that the absence of Mr. Mohan Das was voluntary in the sense that he (Mohan Das) knew beforehand that for committing certain offences he would be put under detention. The absence from the House, therefore, amounted to voluntary absence.

CONGRESS LEADERS' CENSURE MOTION

26th. MARCH :—Replying to a question standing in the name of Mr. *Jagannath Misra* (Congress), Mr. *Pyari Shankar Roy*, Parliamentary Secretary, stated in the Assembly today that Mr. *Biswanath Das*, Leader of the Orissa Assembly Congress Party, had sent a motion of no-confidence in the present Ministry from Berhampur jail. Mr. Das had also made a demand for giving facilities to him and to the other members of the Orissa Assembly Congress Party, who were in different jails under detention, to attend the budget session of the Assembly.

Questioned as to whether Mr. Das had addressed a letter to the Governor of Orissa in this connection and whether the Government would place on the table all the correspondence between Mr. Das and His Excellency and the Government, Mr. Roy said that as the question related to His Excellency the Governor, the Government could not furnish any reply.

The Sind Legislative Assembly

LIST OF MEMBERS

DR. POPATLAL A. BHOPATKAR
 MR. RUSTOMJI K. SIDHVA
 MUKHI GOBINDRAM PRITAMDAS
 MR. NIHCHALDAS C. VAZIRANI
 MR. LOLUMAL REWACHAND
 HON'BLE R. S. GOKALDAS MEWALDAS
 HON'BLE HEMANDAS R. WADHWANI
 MR. DOULATRAM MOHANDAS CHABRIA
 MR. C. T. VALECHA
 LALLA MENGHRAJ BEHRUMAL
 MR. NEWANDRAM VISHINDAS
 MR. HOTCHAND HIRANAND
 MR. GHANSHAM JETHANAND
 MR. GHANUMAL TARACHAND
 DR. CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI
 MR. PARTABRAI KHAISUKHDAS
 MR. TARACHAND DHARAMDAS
 MR. AKHJI RATANSING SODHO
 K. B. A. K. GABOL
 HON'BLE M. H. GAZDAR
 MR. M. U. SUMRO
 MR. MUHAMMAD YUSIF KHAN CHANDIO
 PIR GHULAM HYDER SHAH
 MR. GHULAM MUHAMMAD KHAN ISRAM
 HON'BLE ILLAHIBUX NAWAZALI PIR
 MR. G. M. SAYED
 SHAIKH ABDUL MAJID
 HON'BLE K. B. M. A. KHUHRO
 K. B. HAJI AMIRALI THARO KHAN
LAHORI
 MIR MUHAMMAD KHAN CHANDIO
 MR. M. A. KHOSO

K. S. SOHRAB KHAN SARKI
 K. S. JAFFER KHAN BURDI
 KHAN BAHADUR AHMED KHAN SADAYO
 MR. SHAMSUDDIN KHAN KABIR KHAN
 MR. ABDUS SATAR PIRZADA
 SAKDAR ALI GOHAR KHAN MEHAR
 K. B. KAISER KHAN GHULAM
MUHAMMAD KHAN
 MR. MUHAMMAD ALI SHAH
 MR. NUR MUHAMMAD SHAH
 MR. RASUL BAKHSH KHAN UNER
 NAWAB HAJI JAM JAN MUHAMMAD
KHAN
 MR. KHAIR SHAH IMAM ALI SHAH
 MAKHDUM GHULAM HAIDER
 MR. MIRAN MUHAMMAD SHAH
ZAINULABDIN SHAH
 MIR. GHULAM ALLAH KHAN TALPUR
 MR. BANDEHALI KHAN TALPUR
 S. B. MIR ALLAHADAD KHAN TALPUR
 K. B. SAYED GHULAM NABI SHAH
 MR. ARBAB TOGACHI MIR MUHAMMAD
 MISS JETHIBAI T. SIPAHIMALANI
 MRS. JENUBAI G. ALLANA.
 LT.-COL. W. B. HOSSACK
 COL. H. J. MAHON.
 MR. J. FRASER
 MR. ISSARDAS VARINDMAL
 HON'BLE. SIR GHULAM HUSSAIN
HIDAYATULLAH
 MR. DIALMAL DOULATRAM
 MR. NARAINDAS A. BECHAR

Proceedings of the Assembly

Budget Session—Karachi—24th. February to 6th. March 1943

BUDGET STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

A net deficit of Rs. 63 lakhs for the current year and an estimated deficit of Rs. 13 lakhs for the new year were revealed in the financial estimates for 1943-44 presented by the Premier, *Sir Ghulam Hussein Hidayatullah*, in the Sind Legislative Assembly which commenced its Budget Session at Karachi on the 24th. February 1943.

The figures are : 1942-43—revised revenue : Rs. 57, 021,000 : revised expenditure : Rs. 63,361,000 : 1943-44—estimated revenue : Rs. 49,641,000 : estimated expenditure : Rs. 50,937,000.

The memorandum accompanying the estimate shows that two main factors, namely, the Hur rebellion and the floods turned what might have been a fairly prosperous year, into a bad financial year. Nevertheless, thanks to the prudent husbanding of the resources of the province in previous year, the Government was able to withstand one financial shock after another. Actually, says the memorandum, the deficit expected two or three months ago was over a crore of rupees but improved receipts particularly from land sales, enabled the Government to reduce it considerably.

One other interesting feature of the budget is the way in which the war affected the provincial finances. The rise in industrial activity and the agricultural prosperity due to the war led to rises in revenue under a number of heads and the Government of India paid for the construction of strategic roads which are ultimately for the benefit of the province. The cumulative effect of all this was a net excess in receipts of over one and a quarter crores but this was more than nullified by a net excess in the expenditure side of over Rs. 137 lakhs and a fall of about Rs. 40 lakhs in irrigation receipts due to the floods and Hur trouble.

FRESH TAXATION PROPOSALS

25th. FEBRUARY :—The *Prémier* announced in the Assembly today the following proposals to meet the anticipated deficit of 13 lakhs during the year 1943-44.

Firstly, an increase in the entertainment duty providing for the payment to Government of 20 per cent of the gross takings at all entertainments other than an admission to the race course where 10 per cent will continue to be levied; secondly, increase to one anna per unit of the existing electricity duty and the imposition of a duty of one pice per unit on industrial uses of electricity; thirdly, there would be an increase in certain stamp duties on the transfer of property in the city of Karachi and an increase in certain registration fees.

Other sources of revenue that Government would depend upon to tide over its financial difficulties were the profits that the Government were expected to make through its own trading in the export of surplus food grains and the anticipated extra revenue through the introduction of the revised settlement in July this year. In respect of the last item Sir Ghulam Hussain announced that it was proposed to introduce a sliding scale for the three main crops—cotton, rice and wheat—and to fix the assessment on the average at 30 1/3 per cent of the net assets.

The Premier referred to the Government's proposals for irrigation development costing Rs. 15 crores and hoped that the profits on Government's export trade of surplus food grains will go some way forwards finding funds required.

Defending the Government policy in acting independently in respect of the sale of surplus food grains, the Premier said the Sind Government had no intention of subsidising other provinces by providing them with cheap food when the later, in return, only provided this province with manufactured articles and other produce at prices which had increased more than twice, proportionately above the pre-war level. Very considerable profits are expected by the Sind Government by itself trading in exportable surpluses. "It is realised" said the Premier, "that thereby the Sind Government will receive a considerable income which it is denying to its own producers, but after all this Government and the people generally will reap the advantage which is denied to individuals."

SIND HINDU WOMEN'S PROPERTY RIGHTS

A Bill extending the provisions of the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act of 1937 to agricultural lands in its application to Sind was passed into law by the Assembly today.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

27th. FEBRUARY :—The Sind Government's policy of "trading in commodities for the purposes of making profit" by purchasing surplus wheat within the Province at controlled prices and selling it to other Provinces at higher prices was criticised by Mr *Nichaldas Wazirani*, a former Sind Minister, when the general discussion of the Budget began today. Mr. Wazirani, who initiated the debate, said that it was not proper for the Government to convert itself into a commercial concern nor was it lawful for them to do so under the Defence of India Rules. He maintained that the purpose of the Defence of India Rules, as far as the control of prices and movements of commodities were concerned, was the "maintenance of supplies." Moreover, the Government of India, Section 297, prohibited the Provincial Governments from controlling exports between the Provinces.

Sir *Ghulam Hussein Hidayatullah*, the Premier remarked :—"We are on safe ground and if anybody doubts it, let him go to court."

Mr. *G. M. Syed*, a member of the All-India Muslim League Working Committee, urged the Government to bring forward its agrarian relief bills without fear or favour. The Government should not follow "Hindu Imperialist policy," he said.

1st. MARCH :—The general discussion on the budget concluded to-day. The Premier and Finance Minister, Sir *Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah*, replying to the various points raised by the earlier speakers, rebutted the charge that the revenue returns had been underestimated. He maintained that, exposed as the

province was to the vagaries of the Indus, locusts, frost and other troubles, the only safe course for them was to budget on conservative lines and not live for the present only. To go on borrowing would be bad finance.

In a spirited defence of the Government's decision to trade in surplus food grains produced in the Province, Sir Ghulam Hussain said that the requirements of the people of the province would be first fully met. It was not true that the primary producer would be deprived of all benefit of the prices by reason of the Government's buying at the controlled rate because the Bania would, in any case, have purchased the entire crop beforehand. Under the new arrangement the producer would get more than twice of what he would get otherwise. If the control was not there the producer would get about four annas more, but the middleman would get Rs. 2.

Concluding, the Premier maintained that the operation had been authorised by the Government of India and Rule 81 of the Defence Rules was clear on the point. If anybody thought otherwise, he could challenge the Government in a court of law.

TAXATION MEASURES

2nd. MARCH:—In order to meet the deficits with which the Province is faced the Assembly to-day imposed two additional taxes, both being increases in the existing duties on entertainment and electricity. An additional levy of one pice per unit on the industrial uses of electricity was also imposed. These proposals were expected to yield about Rs. 6 lakhs.

Some opposition was encountered before the measures were passed. A concession of three-fourth anna per unit of electricity consumed in the mofussil was also announced.

The House also voted supplementary budget estimates for the current year amounting to Rs. 162,33,000.

RESOLUTION ON PAKISTAN

3rd. MARCH:—A resolution on Pakistan—the first of its kind to be passed in any Provincial Legislature—was passed by the Assembly to-day. Twentyfour votes were cast in favour of the resolution and three against—the latter consisting of the two Hindu Ministers, Dr. Hemandas and Rai Sahed Gokuldas, and one Hindu Parliamentary Secretary. All the European members remained neutral.

There was a lively debate over the question of admission of the resolution.

After the resolution had been admitted by the Speaker, the non-official Hindu bloc, consisting of seven members, led by Mr. Nichaldas Wazirani staged a walk-out.

Eventually, Mr. Syed's resolution was passed in an amended form providing for safeguards for the minorities and substituting the words "disastrous and unhappy consequences" in place of "civil war with grave and unhappy consequences." The following is the text of the resolution moved by Mr. Syed:

"This House recommends to the Government to convey to His Majesty's Government through H. E. the Viceroy the sentiment and wishes of the Muslims of this Province that whereas the Muslims of India are a separate nation possessing religion, philosophy, social customs, literature, traditions and political and economic theories of their own quite different from those of the Hindus, they are justly entitled to the right of a single separate nation to have independent national States of their own carved out in the zones where they are in a majority in the sub-continent of India. Wherefore, they emphatically declare that no constitution shall be acceptable to them that will place the Muslims under a Central Government dominated by another nation, as, in order to be able to play their part freely on their own distinct lines in the order of things to come, it is necessary for them to have independent national States of their own and hence any attempt to subject the Muslims of India under one Central Government is bound to result in civil war with grave unhappy consequences."

Mr. Nichaldas Wazirani, leader of the Hindu Independent Group, and Rai Sahab Gokuldas, Minister of Public Works, at the outset opposed consideration of the resolution on the ground that the resolution raised not one single issue as required under the Rules but many issues and that the subject matter of the resolution was not primarily the concern of the Provincial Legislature but of the Central Government.

The Premier, Sir Ghulam Hussein Hidayatullah, stated that the issue was quite clear and added that when the House passed a motion on Constituent Assembly in 1937, none of the Hindu members had raised any objection although it was opposed by others.

The *Speaker* over-ruled the objections holding that the issue of whether Muslims should or should not remain under a Central Government "was not merely the primary but the fundamental concern of the Legislature," because a Central Government such as that envisaged in the Act, of 1935 was to be constituted of provincial units and, therefore, their legislatures had a right to express their view on that issue.

Mr. G. M. Syed, the mover of the resolution, in a long speech which the House heard with rapt attention said there was no other solution for the salvation of the country than Pakistan. He dwelt on all the aspects of this question—historical, geographical and national and cited the instances which he considered parallel and decisive for his argument. Tension, however unpalatable, he said, was a necessary condition of progress, because anyone aiming at a fruit becoming sweet before it had matured and passed through the stage of being completely sour was destroying the life of the fruit and would never achieve his purpose. He drew a picture of a subcontinent of people "more or less homogeneous and geographically, socially, economically, religiously and politically one—yet impossible to unite or to be governed as one."

The difference was not only one of class but a material solid fact of the two communities. So long as the Hindus remained as Hindus there could be no possible basis of one nationality. Mr. Syed concluded by expressing the earnest hope that Mr. Gandhi would see the futility of artificial unity. "I venture to hope that his inner light will reveal to him the imperative need to concede to the Muslim nation the right of self-determination and thereby he will spare us all the tragedy that will inevitably happen leading to disastrous consequences if this fair demand of the Muslims is opposed and any condition that does not confer this right upon Muslims is thrust upon us against our wishes."

The resolution was supported by *Sheikh Abdul Majid* who, in moving his amendment, said that the Muslim League had never stood in the way of safeguards for minorities.

Khan Bhadur Khushro, Revenue Minister, supporting the resolution said it was a mistake to suppose that the Cripps proposals had conceded the Muslim demand for self-determination. He referred to the geographical position of Sind and said the Muslims' right of self-determination must be accepted by the British Government.

The Hindu Ministers, Dr. *Hemandas* and *Rai Sahab Gokuldas*, both of whom are representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha opposed the resolution.

Rai Sahab Gokuldas said no such resolution had been passed in any other Provincial Legislature or in the Central Houses of Legislature. It appeared to be moved in the Sind Assembly because its passage was considered to be a certainty in view of the Muslim League majority. He dwelt on the practical difficulties of Pakistan and to the warnings of history against its implementation.

After the *Premier* had supported the resolution, a division was demanded by Dr. *Hemandas*. The division resulted in 24 votes being recorded in favour of the resolution and three against it, namely the two Hindu Ministers and one Hindu Parliamentary Secretary. The three European members remained neutral. The House then adjourned till the 6th.

BUDGET DEMANDS PASSED

6th. MARCH :—The Assembly to-day created another record by passing the entire budget demand for the new year at one sitting, although six days had been allotted for the purpose in the programme.

The Revenue demand was debated upon and passed during the afternoon, and the whole of the remaining demands amounting to nearly four crores were passed in exactly two hours.

Five cut motions moved by the Opposition were withdrawn. During the discussion of the Police demand, Mr. *Gazdar*, Minister for Home Affairs said that there were 80 security prisoners in the province. He added that he had ordered a re-examination of their records.

As regards charges of corruption against the police Mr. *Gazdar* said that one district police officer against whom allegations of corruption were made had been reverted.

The *Speaker*, *Syed Miran Mohamed Shah*, referring to this record, said that nowhere in the history of provincial autonomy had any legislature passed the entire budget within a day. He considered that this demonstrated the strength of the Ministerial party.

As a result of this quick adoption of the budget, the session concluded before the end of the week.

The Punjab Legislative Assembly

LIST OF MEMBERS

Speaker.
THE HON'BLE CHAUDHRI
SIR SHAHAB-UD-DIN
Deputy Speaker.
SARDAR BAHADUR SARDAR GURBACHAN
SINGH

Ministers.
THE HON'BLE MALIK KHIZAR HAYAT
THE HON'BLE RAO BAHADUR CHAUDHRI
SIR CHHOTU RAM
THE HON'BLE DR. SIR MANOHAR LAL
THE HON'BLE MIAN ABDUL HAYE
THE HON'BLE SARDAR BALDEV SINGH
THE HON'BLE SARDAR SHAUKAT

HYAT-KHAN
MR. M. SLEEM—*Advocate General*
Parliamentary Secretaries.

MIR MAQBOOL MAHMOOD
RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN
CHAUDHRI TIKA RAM
RAI SAHIB THAKUR RIPUDAMAN, SINGH
KHAN BAHADUR SHAIKH FAIZ
MAHAMMAD

Parliamentary Private Secretaries.
SAYED AMJAD ALI SHAH
BHAGAT HANS RAJ
SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH MAN
SIR WILLIAM ROBERTS
NAWABZADA MUHAMMAD FAIYAZ ALI KHAN
SARDAR GOPAL SINGH

Members
ABDUL AZIZ MIAN
ABDUL HAMID KHAN
ABDUL RAB, MIAN
ABDUL RAHIM, CHAUDHRI
ABDUL RAHIM, CHAUDHRI
AHMAD YAR KHAN, K. S. CHAUDHRI
AJIT SINGH, SARDAR
AKBAR ALI, PIR
ALI AKBAR, CHAUDHRI
ALLA BAKHSH KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR
NAWAB MALIK SIR
ALLAH YAR KHAN DAULATANA,
K. B. MIAN

AMAR NATH SHAH, LALA
AMIR-UD-DIN, KHAN BAHADUR MIAN
ANANT RAM, RAI SAHIB CHAUDHRI
ASGHAR ALI, KHAN SAHIB CHAUDHRI
ASHIQ HUSSAIN, MAJOR. NAWAB
BADR. MOHY-UD-DIN, QADRI, KHAN
SAHIB SAYED

BALWANT SINGH, SARDAR
BARKET ALI, MALIK
BHAGAT RAM CHODA, LALA
BHAGAT RAM SHARMA, PANDIT
BHAGWANT SINGH, RAI
BHIM SEN SACHAR, LALA
BRIJRAJ SARAN, KANWAR

CHAMAN LALL, DIWAN
CHANAN SINGH, SARDAR
DASAUNDHA SINGH, SARDAR
DESHBANDHU GUPTA, LALA
DEV RAJ SETHI, MR.
DINA NATH, MAJOR
DUNI CHAND, LALA
DUNI CHAND, MR.
DUNI CHAND, MRS.
FAIZ MUHAMMAD KHAN, RAI
FAQIR CHAND, CHAUDHRI
FAQIR HUSSAIN KHAN, K. B. CHAUDHRI
FARMAN ALI KHAN, SUBEDAR-MAJOR
RAJA

FATEHJANG SINGH, CAPTAIN BHAI
FATEH KHAN, KHAN SAHIB, RAJA,
FATEH MOHAMMAD, CAPTAIN MIAN
FATEH SHER KHAN, MALIK
FAZAL DIN, KHAN SAHIB CHAUDHRI
FAZAL KARIM BAKHSH, MIAN
FEW, MR. E.
GHULAM MOHY-UD-DIN, KHAN BAHADUR
MAULVI

GHULAM QADIR KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR
GHULAM RASUL, CHAUDHRI
GHULAM SAMAD, KHAN SAHIB KHAWAJA
GIRDHARI DAS, MAHANT
GOKUL CHAND NARANG, DR. SIR
GOPAL DAS, RAI BAHADUR LALA
GUEST, MR. P. H.
GURBAKSH SINGH, SARDAR
HABIB ULLAH KHAN, K. B. MALIK
HAIBAT KHAN DAHA, KHAN
HARI CHAND, RAI BAHABUR, RAI
HARI LAL, MUNSHI
HARI SINGH, SARDAR
HARJAB SINGH, SARDAR
HARNAM DAS, LALA
HARNAM SINGH, CAPTAIN SODHI
HET RAM, RAI BAHADUR CHAUDHRI
IFTIKHAR HUSSAIN KHAN, NAWAB
INDAR SINGH, SARDAR BAHADUR SARDAR
JAFAR ALI KHAN, CHAUDHRI
JAGJIT SINGH BEDI, TIKKA
JAHAN ARA SHAH NAWAZ, MRS.
JOGINDAR SINGH MAN, SARDAR
JUGAL KISHORE, CHAUDHRI
KABUL SINGH, MASTER
KAPOOR SINGH, SARDAR
KARAMAT ALI, KHAN BAHADUR SHAIKH
KARTAR SINGH, CHAUDHRI
KARTAR SINGH, SARDAR
KISHAN DAS, SETH
KISHAN SINGH, SARDAR
KRISHNA GOPAL DUTT, CHAUDHRI
LAL SINGH, SARDAR
MAZHAR ALI AZHAR, MAULVI
MOHAR SINGH, RAO

MOHI-UD-DIN LAL BADSHAH, SAYED	NASIR-UD-DIN SHAH, KHAN SAHIB PIR
MUBARIK ALI SHAH, CAPTAIN SAYED	NASRULLAH KHAN NASIR, RANA
MUHAMMAD ABDUL RAHMAN KHAN, CHAUDHRI	NAUNIHAI SINGH MANN, CAPTAIN SARDAR
MUHAMMAD AKRAM KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR RAJA	NAWAZISH ALI SHAH, SAYED
MUHAMMAD ALAM, DR. SHAIKH	NUR AHMAD KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR MIAN
MUHAMMAD AMEEN, KHAN SAHIB SHAIKH	PARTAB SINGH, SARDAR
MUHAMMAD ASHRAF, CHAUDHRI	PIR MUHAMMAD, KHAN SAHIB CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD AZAM KHAN, SARDAR	PREM SINGH, CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD HASAN, CHAUDHRI	PREM SINGH, MAHANT
MUHAMMAD HASSAN KHAN GURCHANI, KHAN BAHADUR SARDAR	PRITAM SINGH SIDDHU, SARDAR
MUHAMMAD HUSSAN, KHAN BAHADUR MAKHDUM SAYED	RAGHBIR KAUR, SHRIMATI
MUHAMMAD HUSAIN, SARDAR	RALLIA RAM, M. K. L.
MUHAMMAD HUSAIN, KHAN BAHADUR CHAUDHRI	RAM SARUP, CHAUDHARI
MUHAMMAD IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN, MIAN	RANPAT SINGH, CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD JAMAL KHAN LEGHARI, KHAN BAHADUR NAWAB SIR	RASHILA LATIF BAJI, BEGUM
MUHAMMAD NAWAZ KHAN, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SARDAR SIR	RIASAT ALI, KHAN BAHADUR CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD NURULLAH, MIAN	ROSHAN DIN, KHAN BAHADUR CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD QASIM, CHAUDHRI	RUR SINGH, SARDAR
MUHAMMAD RAZA SHAH JEELANI, MAKHDUMZADA HAJI SAYED	SADIQ HASSAN, SHAIKH
MUHAMMAD SAADAT ALI KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR KHAN	SAHIB DAD KHAN, KHAN SAHIB CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD SARFRAZ KHAN CHAUDHRI	SAHIB RAM, CHAUDHRI
MUHAMMAD SARFRAZ KHAN, RAJA	SAMPURAN SINGH, SARDAR
MUHAMMAD SHAFI ALI KHAN, KHAN CHAUDHRI	SANTOKH SINGH, SARDAR
MUHAMMAD WILAYAT HUSAIN JEELANI, MAKHDUMZADA HAJI SAYED	SANT RAM SETH, DR.
MUHAMMAD YASIN KHAN, KHAN SAHIB CHAUDHRI	SARDAR KHAN NOON, MAJOR MALIK
MUHAMMAD YUSUF KHAN, KHAN	SHAHADAT KHAN, KHAN SAHIB RAI
MUKAND LAL PURI, RAI BAHADUR MR.	SHANNO DEVI SEHGAL, SHRIMATI
MOOLA SINGH, SARDAR	SHRI RAM SHARMA, PANDIT
MUNTAZ MUHAMMAD KHAN DAULATANA	SINGHIA, DIWAN BAHADUR
MUNI LAL KALIA, PANDIT	SITA RAM, LALA
MUSHTAG AHMAD GURMANI, K. B. MIAN	SOHAN LAL, RAI BAHADUR LALA
MUZAFFAR ALI KHAN QUZILBASH, SARDAR	SOHAN SINGH JOSH, SARDAR
MUZAFFAR KHAN, KHAN BAHADUR CAPTAIN MALIK	SUDARSHAN, SETH
NASIR-UD-DIN, KHAN BAHADUR CHAUDHRI	SULTAN MAHMUD HOTIANA, MIAN
	SUMER SINGH, CHAUDHRI
	SURAJ MAL, RAI BAHADUR CHAUDHRI
	TALIB HUSSAIN KHAN, KHAN
	TARA SINGH, SARDAR SAHEB
	TEJA SINGH, SWATANTAR SARDAR
	UJJAL SINGH, SARDAR BAHADUR SARDAR
	UTTAM SINGH DUGAL, SARDAR
	WALI MUHAMMAD SAYYAL HIRAJ, K. B. SARDAR

Proceedings of the Punjab Assembly

Budget Session—Lahore—4th. March to 25th. March 1943

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

The Budget session of the Punjab Legislative Assembly commenced at Lahore on the 4th. March 1943 when supplementary estimates of expenditure for the current year aggregating to Rs. 238,00,000 were presented by Sir *Manohar Lal*, Finance Minister.

The estimates revealed that the Punjab Government have advanced Rs. 30,40,000, to the Co-operative Department for the purchase of maize, bajra and rice to supplement stocks of wheat and gram stored under the wheat storage scheme, and Rs. 17,00,000 to Deputy Commissioners for the purchase of food grains for the people of the province.

It was also disclosed that out of the current year's anticipated surplus of Rs. 85,00,000 the Government had decided to augment by Rs. 60,00,000 the Peasants' Welfare Fund, which was started last year with a sum of Rs. 30,00,000, and increase by Rs. 20,00,000 the special development fund, which was created by the Sikandar Ministry in 1938 with an initial sum of Rs. 55,00,000.

The supplementary estimates also provide a sum of Rs. 1,20,000 for the grant of loans to owners of transport vehicles to purchase producer gas plants in order to encourage the saving of petrol.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

5th. MARCH :—A surplus of Rs. 6 lakhs in the current year on the basis of the revised estimates and a likely surplus of Rs. 50 lakhs in the coming year was shown by Sir *Manoharlal*, Finance Minister, presenting the Budget estimates in the Assembly this afternoon.

The figures for the 2 years are :—1942-43—Revised revenue Rs. 15,77 lakhs ; revised expenditure Rs. 15,71 lakhs ; 1943-44—Revenue estimates Rs. 15,19 lakhs ; expenditure Rs. 14,69 lakhs.

In view, however, of the present abnormal conditions which might call for an increase in expenditure and his pessimism about any real prospect of increase in revenue, the Finance Minister uttered a warning that the estimated surplus of Rs. 50 lakhs was not a fact on which they could safely build plans of expenditure.

Dealing first with 1941-42 the Finance Minister said that at the time of the Budget for the year a surplus of about Rs. 4½ lakhs was expected but the accounts now revealed that the year actually ended, with a surplus of Rs. 64 lakhs.

Analyzing the position during 1942-43, Sir *Manoharlal* said : "When the Budget for the current year was framed, a deficit of Rs. 10 lakhs was expected. The Revenue was estimated at Rs. 13,53 lakhs and expenditure at Rs. 13,63 lakhs. As the year advanced large claims for expenditure for ensuring security, providing against the threat of air raids and the pressing necessity for the grant of dearness allowance, bore heavily on our revenue and at one time I apprehended the likelihood of a deficit of at least Rs. 1 crore, but the revised estimates now before the House show actually a surplus of Rs. 6 lakhs. The surplus that stood out was really Rs. 86 lakhs, and it is only due to a transfer of Rs. 60 lakhs to the Peasants' Welfare Fund and of Rs. 20 lakhs to the special development fund, for which supplementary estimates were presented yesterday that the surplus stands at this reduced nominal figure of Rs. 6 lakhs."

The revised estimates of receipts, Sir *Manoharlal* pointed out, showed an improvement by Rs. 224 lakhs.

Against this big increase in receipts, the Finance Minister said there was a large expansion of revenue expenditure. They included provision during the year of an additional sum of Rs. 31 lakhs for police to strengthen the machinery for securing peace and order ; expenditure on A. R. P. of Rs. 72,54,000 ; expenditure of about Rs. 50 lakhs for dearness allowance to Government employees drawing pay up to Rs. 100.

Continuing, Sir *Manoharlal* said that the revised estimates of receipts for the current year showed a betterment by the stupendous figure of Rs. 224 lakhs. Of these an aggregate sum of Rs. 102 lakhs, representing taxes on income under the Niemeyer Award (Rs. 27 lakhs), Forests (Rs. 25 lakhs), Civil Works largely representing receipts from the Central Road Fund (Rs. 38 lakhs), and beneficent department

(Rs. 12 lakhs) could not be anticipated at all. Of the other items of increase, the largest increase was that of Rs. 68 lakhs under Land Revenue.

Against this big increase in receipts, the Finance Minister went on, there is also a large expansion of revenue expenditure. The most striking features of the year's finance are: (1) a further addition of Rs. 20 lakhs to the Special Development Fund, (2) the transfer of Rs. 60 lakhs to the Peasants' Welfare Fund, (3) provision during the year of an additional sum of Rs. 31 lakhs for police to strengthen the machinery for securing peace and order, (4) expenditure on A. R. P. that now stands at the high figure of Rs. 72,54,000, (5) expenditure of about Rs. 50 lakhs in providing dearness allowance to all Government employees drawing pay upto Rs. 100.

For the current year, Sir Manoharlal pointed out, the budgeted provision for Police was Rs. 1,67,75,000. This had to be increased during the course of the year by about Rs. 31 lakhs. It had now been found necessary to provide Rs. 2,12,40,000 for 1943-44.

TREATMENT OF DETENUS

8th. MARCH:—The Punjab Government have forbidden the levy of any contribution to the War Fund, whether voluntary or otherwise, based on the land revenue demand or collected through the revenue agency. This was announced by Mr. *Magbool Mahmood*, replying on behalf of the Premier to a question.

The House then proceeded to discuss the supplementary demands for grants for the current year. Speaking on a cut motion on the grant for Rs. 11,05,990 in respect of jails and convict settlements, Sir *Gokulchand Narang*, on behalf of the Opposition, made a stirring appeal to the Premier to accord better treatment on humanitarian grounds to Congress prisoners like the Leaders of the Opposition and other Congress members of the Punjab Assembly who had been detained since August 1942.

Lt.-Col. *Malik Khizar Hyat Khan*, Premier, in a brief reply, pointed out that since the Civil Disobedience movement was an all-India movement, the Government of India had laid down the broad principles of policy which had been applied by the Provincial Government in the light of the local circumstances.

Referring to the demand for better treatment of detenus, the Premier recalled that the matter was discussed threadbare during the last session after which the Provincial Government issued a communique setting forth the concessions granted. He assured the House that their intention was to be as human as possible.

The cut motion was lost and the House voted the supplementary demand for grant.

CONGRESS DETENUS IN PUNJAB

12th. MARCH:—If the Congress leaders at present detained in the Punjab give assurances that they will not thwart the war effort, then the Government would be prepared to consider the question of their release in suitable cases.—This announcement was made by *Malik Khizar Hyat Khan Tivana*, Premier, intervening in the general discussion on the budget in the Assembly this afternoon.

Malik Khizar Hyat Khan offered a vigorous defence of the Government's policy in detaining those persons and assured the House that it was not vindictive in any sense. On the other hand, their intention was to be as human as possible in dealing with them short of converting the jails into political clubs. He pointed out that there were at present less than 500 civil disobedience prisoners in the Punjab Jails and that 25 percent of the total number detained had already been released on giving suitable assurances.

The Premier explained that civil disobedience had been launched in the shadow of a danger of invasion and was an open rebellion. It could not be tolerated in a province which had pledged unconditional support to the successful prosecution of the war and whose seven lakhs of soldiers were fighting the battle of India's freedom. He declared that the Punjab Government, which were the chosen representative of the martial classes, found themselves in complete agreement with the action which was necessary to prevent the persons they represented from being stabbed in the back. He took legitimate pride in the fact that the province had been completely free from the disturbances which had occurred elsewhere and that there had consequently been no firing. Only one shot, he added, had to be fired, but no one killed.

Replying to the criticism as to why no interviews had been allowed with the Congress prisoners, the Premier said that the policy of not allowing interviews had been consistently followed by the Government of India in the case of the high

Congress leaders except for the interlude of Mr. Gandhi's fast. He, however, stressed that the Congress demand for one class of prisoners had been conceded and the diet money had been gradually raised in accordance with the rise in prices and was now more than double of what was sanctioned in August 1942.

Referring to the security prisoners, the Premier said that on the first March, 1943, the total number of those detained under Rule 129 of the Defence of India Rules was 49, while those detained under Rule 26 were 164, of whom thirteen had been detained under the orders of the Government of India.

Malik Khizar Hyat Khan revealed that an underground movement had been unearthed and a large number of arms and sabotage materials had been recovered. Three revolvers had also been recovered from a lady.

Concluding, the Premier warmly reciprocated the feelings of communal harmony expressed by several speakers and said that a board for dealing with postwar problems was already at work.

WHEAT PURCHASE FOR CENTRAL GOVT.

An assurance that the Punjab Government had no intention of interfering with the purchasing operations of the existing trade agencies and that the Indian firms would get their due share of commission for the purchase of wheat for the Government of India, was given by the Premier this afternoon, replying to a short notice question about the purchase of wheat on behalf of the Government of India.

Rai Bahadur Gopal Das asked whether it was a fact that the sole agency for buying wheat for the Government throughout the Punjab was intended to be given to a European firm; if so, what were the reasons for the step; why was such a serious departure being made from the set policy of the Government to encourage indigenous trade and venture; what was the special reasons for overlooking the interests of the traders of this province, and whether the Government had invited the views of the Punjab public bodies including the Chambers of Commerce on this question?

Replying on behalf of the Development Minister, *Choudhri Tikaram* said that the Government had no intention of giving anything in the nature of a monopoly on Government account. The arrangements contemplated by the Government would allow the existing trade agencies to function to the full extent of their capacity. The major portion of the commission would go to the existing trading agencies. The arrangements being made were not designed in any way to interfere with the existing trade channels.

The answer evoked a barrage of supplementary questions from the Opposition.

Replying, the Premier assured the House that the Indian firms would get their due share, but the Government could not discriminate against any European firm which had been acting as agent of the Government of India for the supply of wheat.

PREMIER ON HIS DELHI SPEECH

22nd. MARCH:—"I stand by the commitments made by my predecessor, the late Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan," declared *Malik Khizr Hyat Khan Tiwana*, Premier, in the Assembly this afternoon, replying to the criticism of his statement at the recent Delhi meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League about the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. He added that he was a layman and did not wish to enter into high politics.

Speaking earlier, *Malik Barkat Ali* (League), welcomed the Premier's speech at the League Council meeting. The declaration contained in that speech, he said, was an important departure from the past. Now the Muslim League Party would enter into a coalition with other parties and this coalition would be called the Unionist Party.

Choudhri Sumer Singh asked why Malik Barkat Ali was sitting on the Opposition benches.

Malik Barkat Ali replied that he did not sit with the Unionist Party because it did not owe allegiance to the Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah, but as soon as the formation of the Muslim League Party was announced, he together with his colleagues would cross to the Ministerialist benches.

PUB. ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT

The report of the Public Accounts Committee was placed before the House by the Finance Minister, *Sir Manohar Lal*. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the revenue and financial position of the province. The debt position was equally

sound. The net debt which on April 1, 1940, stood at Rs. 353,700,000 rose to Rs. 371,000,000 on Mar 31, 1941, thus adding Rs. 17,300,000 to the debt liability of the province in spite of the loan of Rs. 17,500,000 raised during the year.

These figures demonstrate the sound financial policy which is being pursued by Government in systematically reducing every year part of the debt previously incurred. Against this net debt of Rs. 371,000,000, the capital expenditure outside the revenue accounts up to the end of the year 1940-41 amounted to Rs. 44,99,00,000.

The capital expenditure is thus higher than the net indebtedness by nearly Rs. 80,000,000 and has to this extent been met by the Punjab Government from its own resources. The Punjab irrigation schemes on which by far the greatest part of the capital expenditure has been incurred, have shown themselves over a long series of years to be definitely remunerative.

FASTING IN JAIL

23rd. MARCH :—*Munshi Harilal, M. L. A.*, (Congress) and another Congress prisoner, *Swami Kishan Das* undertook a 21-day fast in Mianwali Jail in sympathy with Mr. Gandhi's fast. This was revealed during question hours in the Assembly this afternoon by *Syed Amjad Ali*, replying on behalf of the Premier. *Syed Amjad Ali* said that fresh and dry fruits at his own expense in addition to as much milk and curd as could be covered by the Government allowance at annas 12 pies 3, was the daily menu of *Munshi Harilal* during the period of the fast. *Swami Kishan Das* prescribed for himself the following scale of food : milk one seer, curd half seer, oranges two, and dates two chhataks.

Syed Amjad Ali added that in view of the diet prescribed and consumed by the two detenus their health was not affected. That was why the Government did not consider it necessary to issue any communique in this respect.

Syed Amjad Ali also informed the House that facilities in the matter of games were allowed to civil disobedience prisoners at their own cost.

There is no suppression of news in the Punjab nor is there any pre-censorship order imposed on newspapers. This statement was made by *Syed Amjad Ali* on behalf of the Premier replying to a question by *Sardar Kapur Singh*. *Syed Amjad Ali* added that the newspapers were at liberty to consult the Press Adviser for guidance whether the publication of any news would amount to a prejudicial report.

RESTRICTION ON THE PRESS

25th. MARCH :—The question of restrictions on the publication of news in connection with the Civil Disobedience movement of 1942 was raised during the question-hour this afternoon by *Lala Duni Chand*, who asked whether the Government intended to remove or relax the restrictions.

Syed Amjad Ali, replying on behalf of the Premier, stated that the arrests since August 9, 1942 had been allowed to be reported by the press subject to certain restrictions designed to prevent such news coming from unauthorised and irresponsible sources. So far as the Punjab was concerned, no factual news of importance had been suppressed, while happenings in other parts of India, as was evident from newspaper reports, had received the fullest publicity. *Syed Amjad Ali* assured that the restrictions would be removed or relaxed as soon as it was desirable to do so.

Answering another question, *Syed Amjad Ali* said that no newspaper suspended publication in the Punjab as a result of any general order issued to the press.

A series of questions were also asked regarding detenus and the House was informed that they were receiving uniform treatment in the different jails of the province where they were confined.

After the question, the Assembly passed supplementary estimates for the current year (third instalment) aggregating to Rs. 2,83,330 and adjourned.

The Government of Bombay

Financial Statement for 1943-44

The Congress Ministry having resigned in 1939, the Governors of Bombay, Madras, Behar, United Provinces, Central Provinces and N. W. Fr. Province assumed Administrative and Legislative powers assisted by advisers. The following is a summary of the Financial Statements for the year 1943-44 :—

A revenue surplus of Rs. 46,000 is anticipated in the budget of the Government of Bombay for 1943-44 published on the 17th. March 1943. The estimated revenue receipts are Rs. 1,769.20 lakhs and Revenue expenditure Rs. 1,768.74 lakhs.

There have been increases in Revenue during the current year, the more substantial being under provincial Excise Rs. 73.21 lakhs, Forest Rs. 73.67 lakhs, and Taxes on Income Rs. 50.60 lakhs. Increased sales of Indian-made "foreign" liquor consequent on curtailment of the import of liquor from abroad account for the bulk of the increase in excise revenue. The supplies of timber for the use of the Defence forces have been vastly extended during the course of the year, and the prices of forest coupes have also increased. Hence the larger returns on this account to provincial revenues. The province gets a share of income-tax receipts and has stood to benefit by the general improvement in these receipts.

The accounts of 1941-42 show that the year closed with a free cash balance of Rs. 291.49 lakhs. The closing balance in the Special Development Fund was Rs. 230.37 lakhs. Apart from the cash balances, there was an investment of Rs. 75 lakhs in long-dated securities, which the Government had made during the course of the year. According to the explanatory memorandum, the accounts for 1941-42 show a surplus of Rs. 161.01 lakhs against the estimated budget surplus of Rs. 0.65 lakhs.

The year 1942-43 which is drawing to an end, is expected to show a revenue surplus of Rs. 59.07 lakhs and to close with a free balance of Rs. 341.39 lakhs. This is on the provisional basis of the eight monthly revised estimates. On the same basis, the closing balance of the Special Development Fund is estimated to be Rs. 202.03 lakhs, after taking into account a transfer of Rs. 20 lakhs to that Fund during the course of the year.

It will be recalled that, in announcing the budget proposals for the current year, the Government expressed its intention to start a Post-war Reconstruction Fund, with an initial amount of Rs. 22.40 lakhs. This amount has been transferred to the Fund during the year, and it is not unlikely that a further amount of Rs. 60.53 lakhs will be added to the Fund during 1943-44. In fact, it is the Government's hope to bring the total provision in the Fund to Rs. two crores by the end of 1943-44.

The programme of post-war reconstruction is already the subject of careful investigation by the Government. It is pointed out that any programme for post-war reconstruction will require a financial outlay far beyond the scope of the annual revenue of the province. For instance, considerable amounts of money will be required for the renewed conservation of forests, which are now being heavily drawn on for Defence needs. The resettling of demobilised personnel of the Defence services will need funds and schemes already proposed by the Director of Agriculture will cost over a crore of rupees.

During the year under review, there have been increases in expenditure under the head "Forest", Rs. 38.09 lakhs and additions to the police force and other allied items of expenditure have caused an increase of Rs. 35.61 lakhs over the budgeted amount under "Police." On account of the prevalence of famine in the Bijapur District and of scarcity conditions in parts of Dharwar, Sholapur and Belgaum districts, there has been an additional expenditure of Rs. 10.50 lakhs under famine relief.

The current year has seen an enormous expansion of the food supply schemes of the Government. These are being financed by advances from provincial balances to be recovered by the sale of foodstuffs. At the stage of the eight-monthly estimates, the amount so advanced was more than three crores of rupees.

In view of the need to build up post-war reserves the Government has decided that no reduction can be effected in the existing taxes, though it has at the same

time recognised that there need be no additional taxation in the present state of the finances of the province.

The only notable increase in the next year's budget estimates of Receipts, as compared with the eight-monthly revised estimates for the current year, are under "taxes on income" (Rs. 24.00 lakhs) and "Forest" (Rs. 19.32 lakhs). It is anticipated that Excise revenue, the present steep rise of which is stated to be due to temporary factors, will in 1943-44 record a fall of Rs. 28.11 lakhs.

The provision on account of dearness allowance is distributed between various heads of expenditure, and the total cost, at the present rates, is estimated to be approximately Rs. 87 00 lakhs per annum, including grants-in-aid on this account to local bodies which adopt similar schemes of dearness allowance like that of the Government for their establishments.

The estimated expenditure for the coming financial year on nation-building services such as Education, Medical, Public Health, Agriculture, Rural Development etc., is Rs. 404.83 lakhs.

The Government propose, as an experimental measure, to re-equip and re-organise certain municipal dispensaries and convert them into "cottage hospital," at a cost of Rs. 73.386. The cottage hospitals will take over from the rural practitioner such cases as cannot be treated at the patient's home and will pass on to the bigger hospitals at the district headquarters. To meet the acute shortage of trained nurses Government, as an experimental measure, propose to start a College of Nursing in Bombay.

On the several schemes figuring in the Special Development Programme there is one which makes a provision of Rs. 5 lakhs for measures to ameliorate the condition of backward classes and another of Rs. 5 lakhs for anti-erosion schemes.

The Govt. of the United Provinces

Financial Statement for 1943-44

A revenue surplus of Rs. 8 lakhs is anticipated in the budget of the U. P. Government for 1943-44 published on the 20th. March 1943. The estimates of receipts and revenue expenditure for the year have been put at Rs. 2,026 and Rs. 2,018 lakhs. In a Note, the Financial Adviser, *Sir T. Sloan* says it is certain that the close of the present year will find the Province in a sound financial position and the prospects for next year are equally good. The main heads are taxes on income, excise, forests, police, civil defence and industries.

In the revised estimates for 1942-43 receipts have risen from Rs. 1,712 lakhs to Rs. 2,011 lakhs and revenue expenditure from Rs. 1,708 lakhs to Rs. 2,000 lakhs, leaving a surplus of Rs. 11 lakhs. Capital expenditure shows an increase of Rs. 62 lakhs. This is due to an outlay of over Rs. 73 lakhs on the Government's grain purchase and storage scheme. Under the debt and deposit heads there has been a deterioration of Rs. 110 lakhs.

Irrigation receipts are expected to reach a new high level of Rs. 227 lakhs in the current year owing to the increase in sugarcane area and more facilities for irrigation provided by the Sarda Canal extension and expansion of the tube-well system. The debt position is practically the same as a year ago. Total liabilities are estimated at Rs. 3,783 lakhs at the end of the current year and Rs. 3,955 lakhs at the end of the budget year.

Regarding 1943-44, under the debt and deposit heads receipts are expected to exceed deposits by Rs. 217 lakhs, and the result of transactions is expected to be an incoming of Rs. 167 lakhs and a closing balance of Rs. 229 lakhs. By the end of the current year Rs. 217 lakhs will have been paid into the Revenue Reserve Fund which was opened last year to enable Government to conserve any revenue surplus primarily to meet the increasing expenditure on civil defence and secondarily to provide money for post-war reconstruction. Government expect to put another Rs. 148 lakhs into the fund next year, making a total of Rs. 365 lakhs, of which Rs. 310 lakhs will have come from sale of equipment. Expenditure on civil defence in the same period is at present estimated at Rs. 235 lakhs, though it may be less.

While the policy of the Government is to restrict new expenditure, they have made provision for new items of total cost of Rs. 18 lakhs, which is Rs. 15 lakhs less than in the current year. Rs. 6½ lakhs goes to nation-building departments

and Rs. 4½ lakhs to police and jails. In the education department of Rs. 1.35 lakhs, Rs. 1.06 lakhs is for girls, scheduled castes' and backward classes' education.

Accounts for the current year show that on the receipts side there are substantial increases under taxes on income, namely, Rs. 35 lakhs, land revenue Rs. 14 lakhs, other taxes and duties Rs. 14 lakhs, irrigation Rs. 17 lakhs, administration of justice Rs. 28 lakhs, police Rs. 19 lakhs, civil defence Rs. 35 lakhs and transfer from Revenue Reserve Fund Rs. 65 lakhs. On the expenditure side, important increases are under forests Rs. 14 lakhs, jails Rs. 16 lakhs, police Rs. 51 lakhs, industries, Rs. 44 lakhs, civil defence Rs. 65 lakhs and transfer to the Revenue Reserve Fund Rs. 90 lakhs.

The increase of Rs. 72 lakhs in excise receipts since 1940-41 is due to 3 main causes—(1) increase in the consumption of country liquor and drugs, (2) substitution of wines and spirits and malt liquor from overseas by commodities manufactured in India, and (3) increased demand for power alcohol.

The account for 1941-42 shows that in revised estimates the Government expected a surplus of about Rs. 18 lakhs after allowing for expenditure of Rs. 75 lakhs not included in the original budget. The actual surplus was Rs. 37 lakhs of which Rs. 35 lakhs was transferred to the Revenue Reserve Fund and the actual surplus shown in the account is Rs. 2 lakhs. Revenue receipts rose from Rs. 1,434 lakhs in the original estimates to Rs. 1,650 lakhs and revenue expenditure from Rs. 1,429 lakhs to Rs. 1,648 lakhs. Capital expenditure at Rs. 39 lakhs was Rs. 23 lakhs less than estimated, and there was a deterioration of Rs. 141 lakhs under the debt and deposit heads.

The Govt. of the Central Provinces

Financial Statement for 1943-44

The budget estimates of the C. P. and Berar Government for 1943-44 published on the 25th. March 1943 in a Gazette Extraordinary reveal a surplus of Rs. 7,04,000. Revenue receipts are estimated at Rs. 6,39,61,000 and revenue expenditure at Rs. 6,32,57,000.

Estimates of both revenue and expenditure are abnormally high due to factors arising out of the war. Revised estimate for 1942-43 indicates a surplus of Rs. 14.64 lakhs as against 3.24 lakhs in the budget. This increase in the surplus is due to increase in revenue under Forests due to large orders for timber and other forest produce required for war purposes. On the expenditure side there is a large increase of Rs. 16.18 lakhs under Civil Defence as only a lump provision of Rs. 4 lakhs was made in the budget.

A new feature of the budget is the creation of a post-war reconstruction fund which by the end of the next financial year will stand at Rs. 30,00,000.

There is no fresh taxation, but taxation measures due to expire are extended by another year.

A notable feature of the budget is the reduction of expenditure under Civil Defence from Rs. 20,18,000 to Rs. 16,86,000, showing a saving of Rs. 3,32,000 during the next financial year, owing to improvement in the war situation.

Government have decided to grant free legal aid to aborigines in accordance with the recommendations of the Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Officer, and a beginning has been made by providing funds for the aborigines of Mandla district.

The scheme for the encouragement of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in rural areas under the auspices of the All-India Spinners Association will be continued and provision for grant of Rs. 12,560 to the association has been made.

The Government of Bihar

Financial Statement for 1943-44

A surplus of Rs. 61 lakhs is estimated in the Bihar Government Budget for 1943-44 published on the 28th. March 1943.

The receipts for the year are estimated at Rs. 697 lakhs and the expenditure at Rs. 636 lakhs. The total revenue budgetted for 1942-43 was Rs. 603 lakhs against

which the revised estimates are Rs. 721 lakhs. Against the total budgetted expenditure of Rs. 580 lakhs for the current year the revised estimates amount to Rs 665 lakhs. There is nothing special in this budget except that the Government are to continue the Prohibition, Basic Education and the Mass Literacy schemes of the Congress Government. The Rural Development Department has been abolished."

The Government of Madras

Financial Statement for 1943-44

A revenue surplus of Rs. 10,05,000 is shown in the Budget Estimates for 1943-44 of the Madras Government published on the 22nd. March 1943, receipts amounting to Rs. 21,32,63,000 against expenditure of Rs. 21,22,58,000.

There is no proposal for new taxes nor for floating loans, but the estimates envisage withdrawal of the usual revenue remissions for the coming year amounting to about Rs. 75,00,000.

The year commences with an opening balance of Rs. 92,66,000 against a closing balance of Rs. 50,68,000.

Transactions outside the Revenue Account show an excess of disbursements over receipts of Rs. 41,98,000.

The Government of N. W. Fr. Province

Financial Statement for 1943-44

The Budget Estimates of the NWFP Government for 1943-44 published on the 22nd. March 1943 show a deficit of Rs. 7,73,000 on Revenue Account.

The total revenue for the year is estimated at Rs. 2,06,94,000 against which expenditure inclusive of new items is expected to amount to Rs. 2,14,67,000.

Formation of League Ministry

A communique from the Government House, Peshawar, announced on the 25th. May 1943 that his Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the following to be members of his Council of Ministers :—

Speaker.

THE HON'BLE SARDAR BAHADUR KHAN,
B.A., LL.B.

Ministers.

THE HON'BLE Chief Minister SARDAR MOHD. AURANGZEB KHAN. THE HON'BLE SARDAR BAHADUR RAB KHAN, NISHTAR, B.A., LL.B.. *Finance Minister.* THE HON'BLE SARDAR AJIT SINGH, Minister P. W. D. THE HON'BLE K. S. RAJA ABDAR REHMAN KHAN, Minister for

Information, THE HON'BLE KHAN MAHAMMAD SAMIN JAN, B.A., LL.B., Minister for Education.

Parliamentary Secretaries.

PIR SYED JALAL SHAH, Chief Parliamentary Secretary. K. S. MALIK-UR-RAHMAN KHAN, M.A. Parliamentary Secretary. KHAN NASRULLAH KHAN, B.A., LL.B. Parliamentary Secretary. RAJA MANOCHENR KHAN, Parliamentary Secretary.

The following communique was issued after the new ministers had taken the oath of office on the 25th. May :—

"In exercise of the powers conferred upon him by sub-section 2, section 93 of the Government of India Act 1935, the Governor of the N.-W. F. P., by his proclamation made with the concurrence of the Governor-General, is pleased to revoke the proclamation dated November 10, 1939, as subsequently varied by the proclamation, dated December 2, 1939."

OFFICE OF ADVISER TERMINATED

Another communique states that with the proclamation of the Governor, revoking the proclamation under section 93 of the Government of India Act previously in force, the office of the Adviser to the Governor held by Mr. I. G. Acheson, I. C. S., has been terminated. His Excellency Sir George Cunningham takes this opportunity to express his grateful appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered to him by Mr. Acheson as Adviser.

Proceedings of

THE

All India Hindu Mahasabha

All India Muslim League

AND

All India and Provincial Conferences

JANUARY—JUNE 1943

The All India Hindu Mahasabha

All India Committee—Cawnpore—1st. January 1943

OFFICE-BEARERS FOR ENSUING YEAR

The All-India Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha met at Cawnpore on the 1st. January 1943, Mr. V. D. Savarkar presiding. About 150 members attended.

The Committee at the outset accepted a resolution authorising the President to select office-bearers for the next year.

After two hours' deliberations, the Committee approved of the names proposed by Mr. Savarkar in consultation with Mahasabha leaders.

As regards representation from the provinces of Bihar, Agra and Oudh, it was decided that the President should appoint arbitrators to hold fresh elections in these Provinces and thereafter representatives will be nominated to the Working Committee.

The following were selected office-bearers for the ensuing year : Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji (Working President) ; Dr. P. V. Naidu, Mr. B. G. Khaparde, Mr. N. C. Chatterji, Rai Bahadur Harish Chandra ; Bhai Parmanand and Sir Gokul Chand Nanang, (Vice-Presidents) ; Dr. B. S. Moonjee and Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri (General Secretaries) ; and Mr. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar and Mr. G. V. Ketkar, (Secretaries).

NEW WORKING COMMITTEE

The personnel of the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha announced to-day consisted for the present of 17 members and included one representative of women. Representatives from the Provinces of Bihar, Agra and Oudh will be nominated later.

The following are members : Mr. S. R. Date (Maharashtra). Dr. Udgaonkar (Bombay), Mr. Madhusudan Majumdar (Gujerat), Mr. M. N. Ghatate (Central Provinces), Dr. Kane (Berar), Mr. R. M. Palat (Kerala), Mr. M. N. Mitra (Bengal), Capt. Keshav Chandra (Punjab), Mr. Chandrakaran Sarda (Rajasthan), Mr. T. Ram Krishna Pandey (Mahakoshal), Pandit Sheonath Vaidya (Delhi), Mr. D. L. Patwardhan (Karnataka), Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna (Frontier), Mr. P. S. Garu (Andhra), Mr. Ganpati (Madras), Mr. Bhojraj Advani (Sindh) and Srimati Janaki Bai Joshi (Poona, women representative).

NEXT SESSION IN AMRITSAR

The All-India Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha accepted the invitation of Capt. Kesho Chandra (Punjab) and resolved that the next annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha be held at Amritsar in the Punjab.

Working Committee—New Delhi—13th. & 14th. February 1943.

The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha met at the Hindu Mahasabha Bhaban, New Delhi, under the presidentship of *Veer Savarkar* on 13th. and 14th. February 1943. The following members were present :

Dr. B. S. Moonje, Pt. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar, Dr. M. B. Udgaonkar, Capt. Keshav Chandra, Sjt. Gulabchand Hirachand, Sjt. S. R. Date, Sjt. V. B. Gogte, Pt. Anand Priya, Lieut. D. L. Patwardhan, Sjt. Bhojraj Ajwani, Lala Narain Dutta, Sjt. A. S. Bhide, and Pt. Shiva Nath Vaid.

The audited accounts of the past year and budget for the current year were read and passed. The time limit of the "Charter of Rights" sub-committee was extended to six months.

(1) ANXIETY ABOUT GANDHI'S FAST

Anxiety about Mahatma Gandhi's health in view of his fast was expressed in a resolution. The resolution proceeds 'prayerfully to wish that his spiritual strength will enable him to survive the ordeal.'

"In case, however, the strain of the fast threatens to endanger his health to any serious extent", says the committee, 'Government must set aside all political considerations and release him to save his precious life.

"Nevertheless, the meeting notes emphatically that fasting as a political weapon used with a view to bringing about constitutional changes and political revolutions, irrespective of their inherent merits or demerits, especially under the political circumstances and foreign domination prevailing in India to-day, is bound to be futile, detrimental and suicidal,

"Consequently any move on the part of Congress or others to exploit this fact for political ends as, for example, to negotiate with the Muslim League or to arrive at an agreement to end the present deadlock, without consulting the Hindu Mahasabha and securing its agreement, would not in any case be binding on the Hindus. The Mahasabha desires all political organisations and the Government to understand that the Mahasabha will resist any encroachment on Hindu rights or any scheme undermining Indian integrity."

(2) CONDOLENCE

This meeting of the Working Committee of the A. I. H. Mahasabha, expresses its profound grief and offers its heartfelt condolence on the unexpected death of His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner, the great patron of the Hindu culture and a prominent representative of Rajput chivalry.

(3) JAIPUR AGITATION

This meeting of the Working Committee of the A. I. H. Mahasabha offers its congratulations to Shriman Seth Jugal Kishoreji Birla, Sjt. Pt. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar, Secretary, A. I. H. Mahasabha, and Kr. Chand Karan ji Sharda, who were deputed by the Hindu Mahasabha, and other Hindu Sanghatanists such as Pt. Ram Chandra Sharma for having brought about the settlement of the controversy regarding the instalment of the Hindi Nagri Script and Language as the Official and Court Language in the Jaipur State and the removal of tax on Cow-Grazing in the State, and offers its grateful thanks to His Highness the Maharaja for having favourably considered the reasonable and legitimate demands of the people of the State.

(4) HINDU RIGHTS IN SIND

This meeting of the W. C. of the A. I. H. Mahasabha, condemns the communal policy of the Muslim League Ministers in matters of general administration in the Province of Sind and the Services, by disturbing ratio of services settled by the Cabinet. The Committee also views with grave concern the proposal of four Black Bills and calls upon the Hindus to oppose such measures and clauses in the Proposed Bills as are detrimental to Hindus of the province and are based on Communal considerations as any legislation based on Communal considerations is sure to lead to disastrous results.

Working Committee—New Delhi—9th, May 1943

The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha met on the 9th, May, 1943, in the Hindu Mahasabha Bhavan, New Delhi, under the presidentship of Mr. V. D. Savarkar. The following members were present :

Shri Ashutosh Lahiry, Kr. Chand Karanji Sharda, Pt. Anand Priyaji, Pt. Ram Krishana Pandey, Lt. D. L. Patwardhan, Shri A. S. Bhide, Dr. M. B. Udgaonkar, Dr. S. K. Kane, Shri R. M. Palat, Capt. Keshab Chandraji, Mrs. Jankibai Joshi, Dr. P. V. Naidu, Shri Anang Mohan Dam, R. B. Harish Chandraji, Shri G. V. Ketkar, Shri V. B. Gogte, Pt. Chandra Gupta Vedalankar, Dr. B. S. Moonje, L. Narain Dattaji, Shri B. G. Khaparde.

The following resolutions were passed :—

SOUTH AFRICAN ANTI-INDIAN LEGISLATION

This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha strongly condemns the Anti-Indian legislation passed by the South African Government in Natal without paying any heed to all India protests to the contrary, and urges upon the Government of India to realise that discriminatory legislation of this type in the British Commonwealth should be stopped by the British Government and that the Indian Government should immediately adopt retaliatory legislation, and that the High Commissioner stationed there be recalled and that exports of jute, cloth and foodstuffs to that country be forthwith stopped in accordance with Reciprocity Act.

Mover, Shri R. B. Haris Chandra,—Supporter, Shri Dr. P. V. Naidu, (Passed unanimously).

MAHASABHA ACCOUNTS IN BANKS

This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha authorises L. Narain Dattajee, Treasurer, Hindu Mahasabha to open and operate upon the Hindu Mahasabha accounts in the Central Bank of India Ltd., Delhi, and the Punjab National Bank Ltd., New Delhi.

Moved from the chair, (Passed unanimously),

CIVIL SUIT EXPENSES SANCTIONED

This meeting of the Working Committee sanctions all expenses that have been incurred in connection with the civil suit to be filed in pursuance of the resolution No. 5 dated, 13th February, 1943 and authorises all other expenses to be incurred in that connection.

Moved from the *chair*. (Passed unanimously).

MAHILA CONFERENCE

This meeting of the Working Committee resolves that in view of the resolution No. 6, passed in the last All-India Hindu Conference at Cawnpore, for holding the session of All-India Hindu Women's Conference with that of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha every year, this committee urges upon all the provincial Hindu Sabhas that in order to make this Hindu Women's Conference representative, they should start the Hindu Mahila Sabha organisation in their Provinces subject to the condition that members of this organisation should also be members of Hindu Mahasabha.

Mover, Mrs. Jankibai Joshi, Supporter, Mr. Chandra Karanje Sharda, (Passed unanimously).

ACTION AGAINST RAJA M. D. SETH

This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha feels that the recent speeches of Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth of Kotra, at the Jwalapur Hindu Conference and elsewhere, while going beyond the legitimate liberties allowed to a dissenting member in a democratic political organisation, to express his views, has misrepresented the resolutions and the leadership of the Sabha which is calculated to harm the prestige of the Hindu Mahasabha. This meeting of the Working Committee, therefore, authorises the President to call for an explanation from the Raja Sahib with regard to this matter and take such further action as he may deem fit.

Mover, Dr. M. B. Udgarkar.—Supporter, Lt. D. L. Patwardhan, 15 voted for the Resolution and 2 against it, 1 non-voting).

Shri. Ashutosh Lahiry then explained the Bengal situation and it was decided that a draft resolution should be placed before the Working Committee meeting at 10 A. M. next day.

The President then announced the formation of Orissa Provincial Hindu Sabha and the affiliation fee having been paid it was decided that it is affiliated to the Mahasabha. The meeting was then adjourned for 10th May, 1943.

Working Committee—New Delhi—10th. May 1943

The adjourned meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha was held on the 10th May, 1943.

Pt. Nilkanta Das was present by the special permission of the president.

The following resolutions were passed after free discussion.

MERGER OF HINDUS IN MUSLIM STATES

This meeting of the Working Committee resolves that in the new scheme of merging smaller principalities into larger States particularly in Gujrat and Kathiawar, certain Hindu Taluqdars and Hindu territories have been put under the rule of Nawabs of Junagadh and Radhanpur, who are notorious for their communal rule, for instance, in Junagadh the Muslims have been given 50 per cent representation in services when they are only 8 per cent of the population. This meeting of the Working Committee urges upon the Crown Representative to put the Hindu States and territories under the Hindu Princes instead of the Mohammedan rule who have no affinity with them and accordance to the principle laid down by the Crown Representative himself.

Mover, Pt. Anand Priyaji, Supporter, Shri V. B. Gogte, (Passed unanimously).

HINDU INTESATE SUCCESSION BILL

This meeting of the Working Committee is of opinion that the consideration of the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, which has been introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly should be postponed till after the war, in view of the following reasons amongst others :—

(I) That it involves revolutionary changes in the rights of succession to property.

(II) That in the present disturbed condition of the country various provisions of the Bill could not receive proper consideration from the different sections of the public.

(III) That it has been adversely criticised by a number of provincial Governments, High Court Judges and other Judges, Hindu leaders and representative bodies, and

(IV) That in view of the fact that the representative Hindu element is not present in the Central legislature. Mover—Mrs. Jankibai Joshi,—Supporter—Shri Anang Mohan Dam. (Passed unanimously).

AGRA, OUDH AND BIHAR AWARDS RATIFIED

This meeting of the Working Committee ratifies the awards of Dr. B. S. Moonje for settling the disputes of the Agra and Oudh Provincial Hindu Sabhas and of Pt. Rama Krishna Pandey in settling the dispute of the province of Bihar.

(Passed unanimously).

PT. NEELKANTH DAS TAKEN ON THE WORKING COMMITTEE

It is hereby resolved that Pt. Neelkanth Das be taken on the Working Committee as a representative from the Province of Orissa and this will take effect from today's proceedings of the Working Committee. —Moved from the chair. —(Passed unanimously).

RESOLUTION ON BENGAL SITUATION

The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha condemns the action of the Governor of Bengal in securing the resignation of Mr. Fazlul Huq in spite of the fact that he possessed a clear majority in the Legislative Assembly, at the time, and in installing Sir Nazimuddin into power by questionable tactics, and contrary to all constitutional practice.

The Committee notes that the Hindu members of the Legislative Assembly were willing to co-operate on the basis of an agreed programme in the formation of an All-Party ministry which was the ostensible plea of His Excellency the Governor in securing the resignation of Mr. Fazlul Huq, but that nevertheless the leader of the Muslim League was allowed to form the ministry without including any representative Hindu in the new cabinet.

The Committee deplores the conduct of the three ministers who were mainly instrumental in establishing the Muslim League Ministry against the decisive opinion of the overwhelming majority of Hindu members of the legislature. —Mover, Shri Ashutosh Lahiri,—Supporter, Shri V. B. Gogte, (16 voted for the resolution and 1 against it and 2 non-voting).

XI. MUSLIM LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha notes with satisfaction that the president of the Muslim League made no reference to Hindu Mahasabha which was a sure indication of the full consciousness of the firm and clear cut ideas and attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha which was characterised by him as "an absolutely incorrigible and a hopeless body" on the question of Pakistan. The fact that he invited a letter from either Gandhiji or Congress, is suggestive of his expectation of a favourable response from quarters from which wellknown "P. S." letter in which Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy that he was ready to agree to a cent per cent transfer of Governmental power to the League emanated. Past experiences of his dealings with the Congress and Gandhiji's attitude exhibited in his "blank cheque" perhaps justified his expectations from a body which resents to be called "Hindu." The Hindu Mahasabha realises that under the circumstances they may have to meet and fight the danger of Pakistan single handed, and urges upon all Hindu brethren to prepare and be ready for the same. One of the remedies, amongst others, is to elect none but a sworn Hindu to all representative bodies.

This meeting further wishes to bring to the notice of the Local and Central Governments that in case they continue to show the indifference they have done so far towards the irresponsible and violent communal utterances of the leaders of the Muslim League, misapprehensions and misunderstandings are likely to grow in the public mind, which may not be conducive to public peace, since such violent language as has been used recently from the Muslim League platform lends itself to the interpretation of being a direct challenge to both the traditional patience and bravery of the Hindus. —Mover, Shri. B. G. Khaparde, —Supporter, Dr. P. V. Naidu (16 voted for it, 1 against it, 1 non-voting).

INTENSIVE PROGRAMME

The Working Committee after deliberations evolved an intensive programme of constructive work in order to enable the Hindus to face anti-Hindu aggression whether from the outside or from inside.

The meeting came to an end with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference

Annual Session—Lyallpur—30th. April 1943

Presidential Address

The Punjab Provincial Hindu Conference opened at Lyallpur on the 30th. April 1943 in a tastefully decorated pandal. Prominent among those sitting on the dais were Dr. B. S. Moonje, Rai Bahadur Mehrehand Khanna, Sir Gokulchand Narang, Raja Narendranath and Mr. Goswami Ganesh Dutt. A big map of "Akhand Hindustan" hung outside the pandal.

Raja Narendranath, inaugurating the Conference, vigorously opposed Pakistan, which, in his opinion, might lead to civil war. He urged the organisation of Hindu Sabhas in every town and village in the Punjab.

We are now in the midst of a world-crisis and whatever the protagonists of a tottering imperial power may say, exploitation of the kind that we have suffered from for a century and a half will no longer be tolerated in the new world, to be born out of the present chaos and conflict," observed Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee in the course of his presidential address.

"A gigantic work of social reconstruction," continued Dr. Mookerjee, "awaits us, for it is only by this process that the masses will be roused to a new race consciousness which will be the first step towards political solidarity. Let the message of unity and organisation be carried to the distant town and village and let every Hindu feel that however poor or forlorn he may be, he has at his back a strong friendly and powerful organisation which will advance his welfare and defend any unjust aggression on his rights and privileges."

In extending felicitation and good wishes of his province to all, Dr. Mookerjee said: "Though Bengal and the Punjab are separated from each other by more than 1,000 miles the problems facing the Hindus in both the provinces are remarkably similar. It is of paramount importance that they should jointly endeavour to face them and solve them consistently with their own welfare and the advancement of the country as a whole. While there will be problems in each provincial sphere peculiar to itself there must be an all-pervading sense of unity among Hindus of all classes throughout India, for only thus can we hope to fight successfully those reactionary elements who are out to keep India in perpetual slavery."

NO MORE PLATITUDES

Referring to the international situation, the speaker maintained that if the object of the Allied Powers in carrying on the present deadly struggle was to free the world from the tyranny of unjust domination, they had every justification in asking them, and especially the power that rules over India, to apply this noble principle to the case of India herself.

"Once India gets a free status subject to such transitory arrangements that may be agreed to for securing satisfactory war operations based on a common policy the entire approach to the problem will undergo a tremendous change. Our past experiences manifestly direct us to the conclusion that our masters have little desire to part with power.

"The history of Indo-British relationship has been one of forgotten and broken pledges, followed by a systematic policy of "divide and rule" and a rigorous application of administrative safeguards which have reduced the constitution to a mockery. India's confidence can no longer be won by words and platitudes."

PAKISTAN OPPOSED

Dealing with the two-nations theory, Dr. Mookerjee said: "We have made it clear beyond dispute that a division of India is no solution of India's communal problem. Financially, it is unworkable. Economically, it is disastrous. Politically it is ruinous for India as a whole."

"It is not on the ground of sentiment alone or merely as Hindus that we are opposed to the vivisection of India. We condemn it as it offers no solution for lasting communal peace and understanding. There can be no compromise on this issue.

"In spite of diversities peculiar to India there is a commonness of aim of thought and outlook, strengthened by economic interdependence and by time-honoured cultural contacts which we can never permit to be weakened. Let the

provinces, with their boundaries redistributed by agreement, if necessary, retain fullest possible autonomy; let Muslims develop themselves and their culture in their own zones, subject to full and equal rights of citizenship enjoyed by minorities residing therein.

"But there must be a strong representative Central Government responsible for the welfare of India as such, controlling such essential subjects as Defence, Foreign Relations, Customs, Currency, Communications and Army. For each such paramount subject there must be a central policy affecting the welfare not of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsees as such but of India as a whole."

CALL FOR UNITY

While inviting all "to stand united for the safety and integrity of our common motherland," Dr. Mookerjee observed: "If, once the Congress, the League, the Hindu Mahasabha and other important elements join hands for facing the common crisis that threatens India's welfare, without being called upon to forego any valued principles that each holds dear and sacred, if each makes an open declaration that there will be a genuine endeavour on the part of all to come to an agreement at the end of the war and before the new Constitution is framed, if once this approach is made to the Indian problem, the solution will be easy one.

"We have declared times without number that the future constitution of India must safeguard the religious and cultural rights of all communities, major and minor. As regards political rights the major community will not ask for itself any special privilege and will accept equal and common citizenship."

Answering the question why the Hindu Mahasabha must continue to function as a separate organisation, the speaker said: "There are many problems affecting Hindus who are already torn into divisions and subdivisions, which have to be boldly faced in order to maintain its social solidarity. It will be the greatest blunder if the Mahasabha remains occupied only with political problems.

"It is necessary that there must exist a political organisation in India, which will remain loyal to the nationalist ideology for which Hindus have lived and died for generations, will genuinely foster communal peace and harmony but at the same time will have the courage and capacity to protect the legitimate rights and aspirations of Hindus whenever there is an attempt to encroach on them or to surrender them for false political expediency. So long as political rights are made to depend by the decree of our rulers on religious consideration, Hindus for their sheer existence must have a well-disciplined and well-organised party of their own. The expression "Hindu" must be interpreted in the most liberal sense including all who are born in this country professing different Indian religions or faiths, and regarding India as their holy Fatherland.

"It is only when Hindus and Muslims will stand together, strong, fearless and well-trained both understanding each other's point of view and realising that it is not Hindusthan or Pakistan they now live in, but Englishman in the truest sense of the word, they will then unite for the attainment of their country's freedom."

Alluding to the Punjab, Dr. Mukherjee said :

"I appeal to the Hindus of the Punjab to stand united. I specially plead with all my earnestness for a complete and permanent understanding between the Sikhs and the Hindus of this province. I shall not take upon myself the responsibility of comparing Sikhism with Hinduism. Sikhism came with a new message, but when the first shock was over, thoughtful men could see that its newness consisted not in the newness of its fundamental doctrines but in the newness of its emphasis. Indeed it can be safely asserted that of the various features of Sikhism, taken separately, there are not many which we do not come across in the past history of Hinduism. What Guru Nanaka did was that he selected certain aspects and put an almost exclusive emphasis on them with the result that the whole, as it emerged, appeared more or less new. It was not, however, a purely religious movement. It was also a movement for social regeneration and uplift. Let us recall in no faltering terms that in most cases the Sikhs and the Hindus were the oppressed at the hands of a common oppressor and in peace and adversity both remained tied to each other.

CRISIS THAT FACES PUNJAB

"To day the crisis that faces the Punjab can be solved in a manner which will redound to the welfare of the province and advance the prestige and self-respect of India, if the Hindus remain united and there is complete co-operation between the Hindus and the Sikhs. This will also pave the way for a real and honourable

understanding with the Muslims which will not be unfair to them and will not at the same time lower the flag of Indian unity and liberty. I have no desire to refer in my speech to the various proposals which have from time to time been made by one party and another. I plead for a dispassionate and impartial survey of the conflicting schemes by chosen representatives of each community so that we may understand each other's point of view and stand united for our common good. Our enemies want that we may be divided and we must resist this by all possible means.

THE CAUSE OF HINDUS

"What the Hindus need most to-day is a burning faith in the justice of their cause. Their cause is not sectarian or communal. Their cause is that of Indian liberty itself. They form about three-fourth of India's vast population. The main responsibility for winning and retaining India's freedom must ultimately rest on them. But the task will be easier, if they can work with the co-operation of all other communities in India.

"In any event during this crisis the task of mobilising the Hindu masses must go ahead irrespective of all obstacles. The gigantic work of social reconstruction awaits us, for it is only by this process that the masses will be roused to a new race consciousness which will be the first step towards political solidarity. Let the message of unity and organisation be carried to the distant town and village and let every Hindu feel that however poor or forlorn he may be, he has at his back a strong friendly and powerful organisation which will advance his welfare and defend any unjust aggression on his rights and privileges. Freedom will not come as a boon from above. It will have to be taken from unwilling hands as a result of active and vigorous preparation. It will not come unless each of the Indian provinces proceed with the task of reconstruction, consistent with an All-India ideal. To-day the power that we enjoy in constitutional spheres constantly reminds us of the pitiable state of puppet Governments set up in territories now under the control of the Axis Powers. Here the external manifestations may be less barbarous but it is the heart of an agonised and enchained India that feebly beats within the framework of the Indian Administration hammered by the iron hands of an outside Authority. Let some Indian representatives, loyal to the national cause, keep the Constitutional Circus going, if necessary. But the real work lies outside the Legislature and among the teeming millions of India's oppressed and down-trodden population."

Concluding Dr. Mookerjee said : With a firm faith in the supreme righteousness of our cause let the soldiers of an unarmed and emasculated India march along the road full of thorns, pit-falls and obstacles that leads to the paradise of Indian freedom. The struggle of a subject country may not always meet with quick and complete success but only weeklings will brand it as a failure and decry further advances. Let us take stock of the achievements that we claim to be our own and mould our destinies on a pattern consistent with our highest traditions. In a spirit of dauntlessness let us proceed along the path of duty and service, asking for the co-operation of all who believe in our cause irrespective of race, creed or community and contribute our humble share in the building of a free and united India."

Resolutions—2nd Day—Lyallpur—1st. May 1943

RELEASE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The Conference at its second sitting to-night passed a resolution demanding the immediate release of Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders in order to create confidence in the minds of the people and to enable the leaders of various political parties to confer together.

Moving the resolution, Dr. B. S. Moonje said that Hindus should be ready to face the threats of Mr. Jinnah. Hindus were not concerned if Mr. Jinnah wanted to fight the British Government but in case he attempted to give effect to his threats to Hindus he ought to know that Hindus were prepared to defend their hearths and homes. He appealed to the Hindus to join the army to keep up their strength in the army which might be a decisive factor.

Sardar Sant Singh, M.L. A., (Central), seconded the resolution.

Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna, who recently returned from America, referred to the last part of the resolution, and said that America had great respect and sympathy for India but since the launching of the civil disobedience in August, 1942, the situation had changed. The place of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress had been taken by Mr. Jinnah and the League in the American Press. The Hindus were now being considered as rebels. The Rai Bahadur emphasised the necessity

of establishing a Hindu organisation in America to put forth their true case before the American public and the press.

The conference also adopted a resolution relating to the organisation of Hindu Sabhas in the province. The resolution was moved by Sir *Gokul Chand Narang* and seconded by Capt. *Keshab Chander* and Goswami Ganesh Dutt.

The fourth resolution recognises the imperative necessity of solidarity and consolidation of the Hindus and Sikhs and views with disapproval any movement regarding the partition of Punjab or any other scheme which may lead to disharmony between the Hindus and Sikhs or any section of them.

A resolution passed by the Conference empowered the President to nominate a committee of five members to take steps to consolidate the Hindus of the Punjab under the banner of the Hindu Mahasabha and to organise the Hindus in the Province. The conference then adjourned.

Resolutions—3rd. Day—Lyallpur—2nd. May 1943

OPPOSITION TO PAKISTAN

Moving a resolution opposing Pakistan, Rai Bahadur *Mehrchand Khanna* (Frontier), said that he did not oppose the principle of right of self-determination provided it was applicable to all communities and not to one particular community. No other nation, he added, could ever agree to divide their country. He asked Mr. Jinnah if he was prepared to allow division of Egypt into "Muslim Egypt" and "Pope-Egypt". The speaker was sure that Mr. Jinnah would never agree to such a proposal. If that was the case why was Mr. Jinnah pressing for the vivisection of India? Mr. Jinnah was giving threats of "blood, strife and misery" but the Hindus, he pointed out, were not afraid of such threats. Concluding, the Rai Bahadur warned the British Government that the Hindus were fully prepared to resist any attempt at dividing their motherland.

Sir *Gokul Chand Narang*, supporting the resolution, said that the Congress was adopting a policy of appeasement towards Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League. In his opinion, this policy of the Congress was responsible for the demand for Pakistan. He, however, was convinced that the dream of Pakistan would never materialise and there would never be a Pakistan in his opinion. Mr. Jinnah was putting forth the demand of Pakistan in order to force Hindus to give Muslims fifty per cent representation in the Central Government. Sir Gokul exhorted the Hindus that they would never agree to give weightage to the Muslims in the Centre. If any weightage was given the Hindus would be reduced to a minority which in his opinion would be a death knell to the Hindus.

The resolution which was further supported by Goswami Ganesh Dutt was carried amid shouts of "Akhand Hindusthan."

Two other resolutions passed by the Conference disapproved of the scheme of "Azad Punjab" and criticised the Unionist Government for enacting "discriminatory measures calculated to seriously affect their economic and cultural interest in various ways."

DR. MUKHERJI'S APPEAL TO PUNJAB

In his concluding remarks, Dr. S. P. Mukherji thanked the people of the Punjab for the warm-hearted welcome accorded to him. He said that he was going back with a new message from the Punjab to his Province and the rest of India. That message was that the Punjab of Lala Lajpat Rai was not dead but was fully prepared to defend any attack on the liberty and honour of its people.

Speaking on the resolutions passed at the conference, Dr. Mukherji said that so far as the general condition in the country was concerned he was sure that no object could be served by sending petitions to the Viceroy but freedom would have to be won by Indians in India without outside help. He complained that systematic propaganda was being carried out in America to lower the prestige of the Indian flag of liberty. He warned American correspondents in India that if they wanted to remain in India as exponents of democracy they should not take sides but present true facts about India to their countrymen.

Referring to the Pakistan resolution, Dr. Mukherji said that the cry of Pakistan was raised from the Punjab. Therefore the graveyard of Pakistan must be found in the Punjab. It was up to the people of the Punjab who believed in the dignity of their country that the monster of Pakistan should not be allowed to go any further.

The All India Muslim League

Mr. Jinnah's Reiteration of Pakistan Demand

"The key to resolving the present deadlock primarily rests with Mr. *Gandhi* and the Congress leaders. If they show real and genuine desire, it is possible to solve the problem," declared Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, President of the All-India Muslim League, replying to the numerous suggestions made that Mr. *Jinnah* holds the key for resolving the deadlock. Mr. *Jinnah* was addressing a meeting of the Muslim Federation at Bombay on the 24th. January 1943.

"It is suggested," observed Mr. *Jinnah*, "that the Muslim League and I, as its President, should take the initiative to get the Congress leaders released from jail. It is flattering and complimentary to me, but let us examine the situation in the country." Mr. *Jinnah* recalled the Congress resolution of August 8th. last and the attitude which the Congress had adopted during the last two decades towards Indian freedom. As late as 1912, Mr. *Gandhi* had said, "So long as there is no workable arrangement with the Muslim League, civil resistance must involve resistance against the League. No Congressman can be a party to it." On another occasion, Mr. *Gandhi* had said that a mass movement during the war, without communal settlement, would lead to a civil war and would be an invitation to suicide. Mr. *Gandhi* had emphasised that independence could never be achieved without a Hindu-Muslim Agreement.

CONGRESS RESOLUTION CRITICISED

The next question was, Mr. *Jinnah* continued, why suddenly Mr. *Gandhi* and the Congress had adopted a policy which culminated in that resolution of August 8, 1942. The policy of independence first and Hindu-Muslim settlement afterwards and the adoption of the slogan of "Quit India" against the British was a sudden, complete and a revolutionary change and an unprecedented somersault. This policy had naturally resulted in the British Government adopting their policy against the Congress mass civil disobedience.

"Do the Congress or Mr. *Gandhi* or other Hindu leaders think that they can achieve the independence of India without an agreement with the Muslim League?" asked Mr. *Jinnah*, and continued: "The policy adopted - as has been stated by Mr. *Gandhi*—is a suicidal policy. May be, that the Mussalmans are numerically one-fourth. But you cannot always go by counting heads. The Muslims are a very powerful nation in this sub-continent. The attitude of the Congress leaders is quite clear. Mr. *Gandhi* and the Congress think that they are strong enough to compel the British Government to surrender and submit to their demands at the sacrifice of the vital and paramount interests of Muslim India. Ignoring the Muslim League could have no other meaning."

MAHASABHA ATTITUDE

In this connection, Mr. *Jinnah* referred to the recent resolution adopted by the Hindu Mahasabha at Cawnpore and said: "The Mahasabha, which is a counterpart of the Congress, makes no bones about it. They say, 'We are going to get the freedom and independence of India with you, if you like, and without you if you won't come.'"

Proceeding, Mr. *Jinnah* said that the parties concerned, apart from ignoring the Muslim League, were attempting to coerce and intimidate the British Government with threat of dire consequences. He asserted that the hundred million Muslims would undoubtedly revolt and would never submit to be at the mercy of a Hindu Raj.

Mr. *Jinnah* continued, "On the contrary, the decision of the Mahasabha would only give a handle to British diehards to use the unanswerable argument that 'we can do nothing if there is no agreement among the major parties.' Supposing the Congress succeeded or that the British Government quitted India and according to the conception of the Congress, India became independent, Mr. *Jinnah* asked whether the Congress would be able to retain the freedom of the sub-continent. It was obvious that Muslim-India would never submit to a Hindu Raj and the result would only be anarchy and chaos.

Mr. *Gandhi* himself had stated that after the British leave they might come to a settlement or they might not, and further stated that there might even be bloodshed and civil war. It was therefore difficult for one to understand and

follow the policy of the Congress or that of the Hindu Mahasabha. But there were newspapers that kept on writing and made suggestions that some sort of a compromise should be effected. Several other suggestions and proposals had emanated from various other quarters also. They clearly showed that they did not believe in the 'Quit India' policy. What they wanted was compromise, compromise not with the Muslims, but compromise with the British Government. They wanted the British in this country, though that was not their official policy. They were not for immediate independence or for "Quit India" but for the establishment of some sort of Government which would enable the Hindus to dominate and strangle the Muslims gradually under the aegis of the British.

Mr. Jinnah characterised such dreams as mere "moonshine" and asked whether the British Government were going to put "Gandhi and Nehru on the gadi of the Government of this subcontinent to dominate over the Muslims and others with the help of the British bayonet. If the Congress and the Hindu leaders sincerely wish for the freedom and independence of both the nations, Hindus and Muslims, then there is no other way except to agree to the Pakistan scheme. If the Congress continues to talk of Akhand Hindustan and a United India, the prospect is continuation of slavery for all." Mr. Jinnah asserted that "Akhand Hindustan" meant, as had been made clear by the Mahasabha Resolution passed at Cawnpore, complete domination by the Hindus.

REPLY TO MR. AMERY

Once again, referring to the suggestion that the League should take the initiative in solving the deadlock in India, Mr. Jinnah said that in this connection the reaction of the British should be studied. He read out extracts from Mr. Amery's recent speech and said: 'Mr. Amery has made a discovery of a historical nature and has been studying the pattern of Akbar's Government for the post-war reconstruction of India. The British Government in India, too, is constituted like Akbar's Government. Akbar had Hindu Ministers and Muslim Ministers. Akbar knew he had to rule over both. He was eminently concerned with his own autocratic rule and that was no rule at all. He went as far as he can placating the Hindus at one time and placating the Muslims at another. He nominated his own Ministers from different nationalities for civil and military administration. The Hindus were never reconciled to his rule, and when there was any trouble either with the Hindus or with the Muslims, Akbar did his job whether through his Muslim or Hindu Ministers. That is the system of government which is sought to be perpetuated in this country. United India means that so far as the people are concerned they have no voice and it is the rulers who will rule by manoeuvring. It is that system which the British Government in India is following and desires to continue. The present Executive Council of the Viceroy is on the same pattern as that of Akbar's. There are Muslims, Hindus, Parsis, and the Sikhs, all nominated by the Viceroy to this job.'

Referring to H. E. the Viceroy's speech at the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta, Mr. Jinnah said: "While Mr. Amery was engaged in research of Indian history and preached united India, we find that the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow has suddenly discovered, almost seven years after his stay here, that India is geographically one. What does this indicate to any intelligent man? The Hindu Mahasabha by its Akand Hindustan resolution, which it adopted at Cawnpore, has made a new year present to the British diehards".

"NO SIGN OF CHANGE OF HEART IN CONGRESS"

Under the circumstances, Mr. Jinnah asked how he could resolve the deadlock. There had been no evidence of a change of attitude on the part of the Congress since August 8th. Though many Congressmen were in jail, yet all Congressmen were not in jail, and "the Hindu Press was not in jail." So far, there was not any sign of any change of heart. There had been no great proposal except rigid adherence to the position that the Congress has taken up by the resolution of August 8 and which has been endorsed in a most aggressive form by the Hindu Mahasabha. "Is there no body of men with a clear head, a body of Hindu opinion with sanction behind them, who have a proposal for the solution of the present deadlock? Is there any body of opinion which can give some assurance—and which has some sanction and authority behind any definite proposal it makes—of a change of heart and a change of attitude and desire to negotiate and come to a settlement with Muslim India and the Muslim League?" asked Mr. Jinnah. "If you analyse the

position," he added, you will find that the key to resolving the present deadlock is in the hands of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress by evincing a real and genuine desire for a change. Otherwise, the great authority attributed to me is merely in the nature of a compliment. I did not have the power to put them in jail, and how can I have the power to open the jail gates?

After reiterating the Muslim League demand for Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah advised Muslim students, without in any way sacrificing their studies, which were absolutely necessary, to engage themselves in social work amongst Mussalmans during their vacation. He also advised them to study the state of affairs in India and abroad.

Dr. Latif Criticises League Attitude

Dr. Abdul Latif of Hyderabad (Deccan), author of the Pakistan Scheme, blames the League President, Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah and appeals for contacting Congress Leaders in a statement issued to the Press on the 3rd. February 1943: The following is the text:—

"Yesterday the Muslim League appeared to hold a key position in Indian politics. But how does it stand to-day?

Mr. Jinnah in his latest utterances at Bombay complains that the key has passed on to other hands. If that is so, who is responsible for it?

"Several opportunities did present themselves to the League last year to take the lead in improving the situation; but one by one they were thrown away in sheer petulance.

"Its supreme moment came when during the first week of August last, the Congress, at my instance, clarified its attitude 'vis-a-vis' "Pakistan". It was an earnest attempt to placate the Muslim League. The Congress held out the largest measures of autonomy to units, residuary powers and even the right of secession. All that argued sovereign status to units including Pakistan areas.

"The Congress also looked forward to the opening of formal negotiations with the League to afford further clarification of its attitude, if necessary. But Mr. Jinnah would not appreciate the move.

"Instead, he stiffened his intransigent attitude by coming upon the British Government on the one hand and Indian political parties on the other, first to guarantee an undefined Pakistan before he would entertain proposals from them for the formation of an interim Provincial Government to rally the people for the defence of the country.

"What was the response? The Congress Executive was by now in jail and could not speak.

"The Mahasabha at first did try make overtures, but soon realized that counter-intransigence was the only answer to Mr. Jinnah.

"The leader of the Depressed Classes, Dr. Ambedkar refused to involve himself in what he considered a mere personal feud between Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi.

"Even Mr. Rajagopalachari forsook Mr. Jinnah in despair; while Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Dewan of Travancore, in what he considered the abiding interests of Indian States, was not prepared to understand him.

"From the British side also nothing encouraging came forth. The Viceroy gave Mr. Jinnah a cold shoulder and friend Mr. Amery, forgetting every promise made in the past, seriously put the question to himself whether Akbar's plan of administration would not suit future India.

"On the top of all this, the Turkish Mission chose to administer a 'coup de grace' to all expectations of active sympathy from independent Muslim countries by making it clear in their reply to the League Secretary's address that Turkey was not interested in the domestic squabbles of India such as Pakistan.

C. R.'s NEW OFFER

"This is the position to which the League has now been reduced. To disturb its equanimity still further and complicate the situation, Mr. Rajagopalachari has evolved a new technique to hoist the League with its own petard. "Have your pound of flesh," says he in effect to Mr. Jinnah, a tiny lump to the West of Lahore and a tiny lump round about Dacca and Mymensingh, poverty stricken patches. That is the utmost that you can have in terms of your Pakistan resolution and your creed. Have it. It will be a good riddance for us; for then, we Hindus, shall be free to have a strong Central Parliamentary Executive for the rest of India, a single party Government under whose dispensation your Muslim minorities shall have to live."

ANGULARITIES MUST GO

"How does all that strike Mr. Jinnah? Will he, for a moment, think that he is simply eddying about in blind uncertainty obsessed with meaningless egoism? The Muslim League on his account is still a concern of the easy going—of those who would lie in ambush to pounce upon gains gathered by others."

Council Meeting—Resolutions—New Delhi—7th. March 1943

MR. JINNAH ELECTED PRESIDENT

At the session of the All-India Muslim League Council held at New Delhi on the 7th. March 1943, the Secretary of the League announced amidst cheers, that all provincial Leagues had unanimously recommended Mr. Jinnah's name for the presidentship.

Prominent among those present were *Nawab Mohd. Ismail, Choudhry Khali-guzzaman, Lt.-Col. Khizar Hayat Khan, Mr. Abdul Haye, the Nawab of Mamdot, Begum Aizaz-Rasul, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Sir Yamin Khan, Mr. Hossain Imam, Mr. Yusuf Haroon and Moulvi Abdul Ghani.*

SIND PAKISTAN RESOLUTION APPROVED

The Council adopted a resolution approving the decision of the Sind Assembly, endorsing the Pakistan resolution of the Lahore session or the All-India Muslim League. The Council felt confident that other Muslim majority provinces would follow Sind's lead. The resolution was moved by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, M.L.A. (Central).

PUNJAB MINISTRY FORMATION DISCUSSED

The position of Muslim members of the Punjab Assembly in relation to the League was explained by the Punjab Premier, *Lt.-Col. Malik Khizar Hyat Khan*, speaking on a resolution moved by *Maulana Abdul Hamid Badauni*, to the effect that these Muslim members should form a Muslim League Party as soon as practicable and in accordance with the League policy.

The Punjab Premier pointed out that the resolution was unnecessary as a Muslim League Party existed under the terms of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact. He did not wish to enter into a controversy whether this Party had been working as efficiently as was expected of it, but he assured the Council that he would endeavour to put life into that Party, consolidate it and bring it up to a standard worthy of the great organization of the Muslim League and the Muslims of the Punjab and serve the true interests of the Muslims. "You will never find me and my Muslim colleagues failing in our loyalty to the cause of Mussalmans and their sole representative body—the All-India Muslim League."

The Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, he said, had laid down that *Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan* was to convene a meeting of the Muslim members of his Party and advise them to join the League and as such they were to be subject to the rules and regulations of the central and provincial boards of the League and this was not to affect the continuance of the coalition of the Unionist Party and that the existing combination was to maintain its name—the Unionist Party.

The Punjab Premier also explained the circumstances in which he was invited by the Governor to form a Government after the death of the late *Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan*. He said he had an opportunity of consulting a large number of Muslim members of the Assembly before accepting the invitation. The action of the Governor was unanimously approved at a meeting of the Muslim League Party, convened by the President of the provincial Muslim League in the 1st week of January. Subsequently at another meeting of the party on January 23, he explained that he had accepted the Governor's invitation because an emergency had arisen, but it was open to the party to have any one they liked as their leader, and he assured them that he would most faithfully abide by their decision and would support any person whom the party decided to have as their leader. "This meeting, which was very largely attended, unanimously expressed their confidence in me. The decision of the party was subsequently endorsed by the Unionist Party and the Ministerial Coalition."

He quoted a passage from the Instrument of Instructions indicating the procedure which a Governor had to adopt in making appointments to his Council of Ministers and said: "In view of this and the facts already stated by me, I am sure the House will agree that my acceptance of the Government invitation was constitutional and in accordance with the unanimous wishes of the members of the

Muslim League Party and all other parties and groups that constitute the Ministerial Party."

As regards the appointment of the 6th Minister, he said that from informal consultations with members of the Muslim League Party he had come to the conclusion that an overwhelming majority was in favour of Maj. *Shaukat Hyat Khan*. He accordingly asked Maj. *Shaukat Hyat Khan* to join the Muslim League and on his agreeing to do so he (the Speaker) advised the Governor to nominate him as a Minister.

MR. JINNAH'S OBSERVATIONS

The President Mr. *Jinnah*, said: "You have heard the statement of *Malik Khizar Hyat Khan*. The main object of the resolution is that a Muslim League Party in the Punjab Legislature should be set up. As explained by *Malik Khizar Hyat Khan* a party already exists. It is a different question whether it has been functioning efficiently or not. But now a definite assurance has been given that efforts will be made to make the party worthy of the prestige and honour of the sole authoritative and representative body of the Mussalmans, namely, the Muslim League. Therefore, might we not wait and see what efforts are really made?"

Mr. *Jinnah* proceeded to recall the terms of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, and said the essence of the whole arrangement was that Muslim members of the Unionist Party were to function as a separate party. Actually, 86 members had signed their pledges and given them to him. Constitutionally, the party did exist but it did not function properly as it ought to have. Many things would have to be done to make it really efficient and strong.

Maulana Hamid Badauni, mover of the resolution regretted that the Punjab Premier before accepting the Governor's invitation had not consulted the Quid-e-Azam. He welcomed the assurances from the Premier and hoped that all Muslim Ministers in India would look up to the All-India Muslim League and its President rather than anybody else. He could not understand why he was asked not to press his resolution, which only aimed at strengthening the Muslim League in the Punjab.

Mr. *Jinnah* said: "When the Punjab Premier has given the assurance that the Muslim League Party in the Legislature will be brought on a proper footing, I do not know what the mover wants to be discussed. The basis of the resolution does not exist. The party is already there."

Maulana Hamid Badauni urged that his resolution be adjourned till the next meeting.

Mr. *Jinnah* said: "The point is not that it should be adjourned, I should consider the resolution to be out of order, but I leave it to you to withdraw."

The resolution was withdrawn.

MUSLIM MASS CONTACT

Dr. *Afzal Hussain Qadri* moved a resolution urging for the creation of a central mass organization committee to organize the Muslims, especially the masses, more effectively, and to impart to them a sound and acute political consciousness and training and also to bring about greater solidarity and contact between the Muslims of the various provinces.

Mr. *Jinnah* pointed out that the Muslim League Civil Defence Committee, after their first 14,000 miles' tour of each and every province of India, apart from their immediate task of organizing the Muslims to defend themselves against external and internal dangers, had brought back ample material relevant to this resolution. They were going on tour again and thus they would have another opportunity of further exploring the same subject. It was better to wait for their return and in the meantime, the resolution could stand open till the session of the All-India Muslim League. Further consideration of the resolution was thereupon postponed till the next meeting.

SIND ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON PAKISTAN ENDORSED

Moving a resolution approving of the Sind Assembly's action in endorsing the Pakistan scheme, *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan*, M.L.A. (Central), remarked that Sind had played its historical role. Thirteen centuries ago, Islam came to India through that province and once again, that province had shown the way by raising the banner of Pakistan. He hoped that similar resolutions would be adopted in the Punjab, Bengal and the North-west Frontier Province.

After the resolution was seconded, the Chair said that, so far as the League was concerned, it was not a controversial resolution. Therefore, further discussion was unnecessary. The resolution was put to vote and unanimously carried.

In his concluding remarks Mr. *Jinnah* expressed his pleasure that during the last few months, trying and difficult, a period of various developments in the country, it was clearly demonstrated that Muslim India stood solidly united behind the League and spoke with one voice. He said that he would review the whole situation at the forthcoming session of the All-India Muslim League in April.

Earlier, the meeting adopted a resolution of condolence on the death of Sir *Sikander Hayat Khan*, "who had rendered very valuable services to the Muslim League and who was a member of the Council and the Working Committee for many years."

Open Session of the Muslim League

30th. Session—New Delhi—24th. April 1943

Presidential Address

In a tastefully decorated pandal, which was full to capacity and amid repeated shouts of 'Allah-o-Akbar' the 30th session of the All-India Muslim League commenced at New Delhi on the 24th. April 1943 under the presidency of Mr. *Mahomed Ali Jinnah*. The pandal was decorated with bunting and placards with slogans, such as "Freedom of India lies in Pakistan." There was a map of Pakistan placed at the head of the dais. A feature of the audience was the presence of a large number of Muslim ladies, both inside and outside the purdah enclosure.

Long before Mr. *Jinnah's* arrival, the pandal became crowded and prominent persons were seated on the dais. They included the members of the Working Committee of the League and distinguished visitors, included among whom were Sir *Mahomed Usman*, Sir *Peroz Khan Noon*, Colonel *Khizer Hyat Khan*, Premier of the Punjab, Sir *Ghulam Hussain Haliyatullah*, Premier of Sind, Major-General Victor Odlum, Canadian Minister to China, Mr. *Lao*, Secretary to the Chinese Mission in India, Nawab Bahadur *Yar Jung*, Sir *Ziauddin Ahmed*, Sir *Raza Ali* and Sir *Yamin Khan*.

Mr. *Jinnah* was dressed in white sherwani and for the first time to-day wore a button on his collar with the letter 'P' standing for Pakistan engraved on it. He was received with tremendous ovation and cheering.

The proceedings started with recitation from the Koran. Mr. *Jinnah* spoke for three hours and was heard with rapt attention and in pin drop silence. His speech was punctuated with shouts of 'Allah-o-Akbar', 'Jinnah Zindabad' and 'Pakistan Zindabad'. There were 1,200 delegates and 350 members of the Council of the League present this morning.

In the course of his address, Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* said that nobody would welcome it more than himself if Mr. *Gandhi* was now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League and that would be the greatest day both for Hindus and Muslims. He then proceeded to explain the nature of the Government under Pakistan and deprecated all loose talk about Federation.

APPEAL TO HINDU PUBLIC

After charging Mr. *Gandhi* and other Congress leaders with systematic and deliberate attempt to establish Hindu rule in India, Mr. *Jinnah* said : "Let us close that chapter. Even nations that have killed millions of each other—we have not done so yet—even they who were the bitterest enemies yesterday have to-day become friends. That is politics. I make this appeal to the Hindu public. If your leaders are on this path, as I say they are, and if you do not approve of it, is your responsibility to come forward and say, 'Stop this internecine war. Declare a truce. Let us sit as two equals and come to a settlement'. That is now the problem of problems. I ask, how can you keep on saying that it is the British who keep us apart? Of course, I grant the British take advantage of our policy. But we have devices of our own which are better than any devices that the British Government can fashion to keep us disunited (cheers). Why should not the country say : 'Unite and drive the British out?' It is no use appealing to other nations of the world."

Mr. *Jinnah* referred to the internal affairs of the League and declared :

"There is not the slightest doubt that the Muslim League is moving from strength and strength throughout India." (cheers).

He congratulated the Muslims of Bengal and particularly the youth of Bengal, and condemned the "tyranny, persecution, manoeuvring and machinations and disregard of elementary principle of justice and fairplay" resorted to by the Government headed by Mr. *Hug* and said: "We have gone through the crucible of fire in Bengal and to-day Mr. *Fazlul Luq* is no more (laughter and cheers), and I hope for the rest of his life he will be no more."

BENGAL'S EXAMPLE

"Bengal," Mr. *Jinnah* went on, "has shown that there is no more room for duplicity. Bengal has set an example from which others may learn." (cheers).

"The League is now the voice of the people, the authority of the Millat, and you have to bow before it, even though you may be the tallest poppy in the Muslim world," he added.

The League had formed Ministries in Assam, Bengal, Sind and the Punjab, but he warned the audience not to run away with the idea that that was all they wanted. "This is only the starting point, and it is not what we are willing to make sacrifices for the Ministries. We expect the Ministries to make all the sacrifices for us. So long as these Ministries remain within the orbit of the fundamental principles and policy of the League, they will certainly have our support, but I want to make it once more clear that the time has now come when we will not hesitate to withdraw our support from any Ministry." (cheers).

Referring to Sind, he asserted it would be no exaggeration to say that almost 99 per cent of Muslims were with the League. In the North-West Frontier Province, which was the only Province which remained under Section 93, his information was that within the last 16 or 18 months, it was entirely with the Muslim League. That information was based on the testimony of foreign correspondents who had been there and examined the situation. Similar was the position in the Punjab. "But I regret to say that the Punjab has not yet played the part that it ought to play and is entitled to play, because, remember the Punjab is the cornerstone of Pakistan. I particularly appeal to the delegates from the Punjab. The people are all right. I appeal to the delegates, and I ask them to substitute love of Islam and Muslim nation in place of sectional interests, jealousies, tribal notions and selfishness. These evils have overpowered you, and your being ground down. But I think I see light, a very bright light. I was very happy to see throughout my tour of the Punjab last November that the people are all right and quite sound. My appeal is to the leaders, and I assure you that if our leaders in the Punjab,—and we have got able and capable men—if they will make up their minds, I feel confident that within six months the face of the Punjab will be changed."

HINDU-MUSLIM DIFFERENCES

Mr. *Jinnah* gave the background of the freedom movement in India and traced the development of the constitution from 1861 onwards. Quoting from the late Mr. *Gokhale's* statements, Mr. *Jinnah* said it was *Gokhale* and *Dadabhai Naoroji*, at whose feet he had sat, who inspired Mussalmans with the hope of a fair and reasonable adjustment between Hindus and Muslims. Mr. *Jinnah* quoted extensively from Mr. *Gandhi's* writings to show that he was inspired by the aim of establishing a Hindu Raj, and continued: "Now we are told repeatedly by the organized Press in India that the Muslim League is a communal organisation. It is the Hindu leaders who have deliberately and with a set purpose destroyed any possible chance of the adjustment between these two communities, by well planned and systematic manoeuvres and by organizing themselves and then calling themselves nationalists and democrats. I ask you, Is this nationalism and democracy? (Cries of No, no).

"We learnt democracy 1300 years ago (cheers). It is in our blood, and it is as far away from the Hindu society as the Arctic regions. It is we who learned the lessons of equality of man and brotherhood of man. Among yourselves one caste will not drink a cup of water from another. We are for democracy but not the democracy of your conception, which will turn the whole of India into a *Gandhi Aaram*. I say, give up this pose. You have made your bed. You may lie on it. Have your Hindu nationalism. Have your democracy to your heart's content. Have your Hindustan if you can. I wish you God-speed, but we are not going, so long as life is left in a single Mussalman, to have that type of democracy." Quoting the reply given by Lord *Carson*, Ulster Leader, to Mr. *Raymond*, he would say to Mr. *Gandhi*: "I don't want to be ruled by you." (cheers).

CONGRESS MOVE TO ENFORCE FREEDOM OF SPEECH

After referring to the failure of the *Cripps* proposals, Mr. Jinnah dwelt on the plan to launch individual civil disobedience to enforce freedom of speech and said : "I think even if it was our own Government, if I had any say in the matter, and if an organisation, the most powerful in the country, with all its resources, wanted to be let loose to preach against war effort, I would put them in jail. How do you expect any Government to allow this thing to be carried on ? (Cheers). Was it really intended to vindicate freedom of speech, or was it intended to crush the British Government ?"

After commenting on the "new technique" of the Congress and the "Quit India" resolution, Mr. Jinnah said : "The British say that in resisting the Congress they are protecting us. We say, 'Nothing of the kind. We don't believe that you love us so much.' We know it suits them and they are taking the fullest advantage of the situation, because if there is any agreement between Hindus and Muslims, then they know the net result of that would be parting with power. If we can not secure power as a united India, then let us take it as divided India. (Cheers)."

BRITISH GOVT'S. POLICY

The British, said Mr. Jinnah, knew full well that Hindus and Muslims would not agree, and if by some means or other they could agree, then it would be nothing but a cock-pit of fued under the umbrella of a united India, with the Englishman on top. *Lord Linlithgow* and Mr. *Amery*, who were of the pucca diehard brand, were dangling the carrot before the donkey by saying that geographically India was one and that under *Akbar* India was united. If by any miracle Hindus and Muslims came to an agreed constitution on the basis of a united India, it could only be done for British India, and then the biggest hurdle would be the Indian States. There were a series of hurdles.

"This," said Mr. Jinnah, "is the policy of the British Government pursued for a hundred years. Not only have they somehow or other made us miss the bus, but put us on the wrong bus. (Cheers). "I say to the Hindus—and the British know it—the quickest way for the freedom of the people of India, both Hindus and Muslims, is Pakistan. (cheers), whether it comes in my lifetime or not. (Ories, 'It will') : I can say this with a clear conscience. My regret is that it is the Congress and Hindu leadership that is holding up the attainment of freedom for both Hindus and Muslims."

NATIONAL GOVT. PROPOSAL

Mr. Jinnah referred to the recent correspondence between Mr. *Gandhi* and *Lord Linlithgow* in which Mr. *Gandhi* observed that the Congress was prepared to let the *Qaide-Azam* form a National Government for the duration of the war, such a Government being responsible to a duly elected Assembly. What, asked Mr. Jinnah, would be left if this proviso about responsibility to the Legislature was carried out ? *Lord Linlithgow* would immediately be turned into a constitutional Governor-General, if he did not get the kick (laughter). The Secretary of State would be abolished, the India Office and His Majesty's Government would be abolished. This simple proposal could only be brought into effect by repealing completely the present constitution. It could not be done otherwise. Then it would follow that the Provincial Governments should also be overhauled. It would mean undertaking the framing of an entirely new constitution for the whole of India.

Mr. Jinnah said : "If we proceed on that basis immediately, is it not obvious that once that basis is accepted, the Pakistan demand is destroyed at once, to say nothing of the bitter controversy that will arise on the basis of the constitution to be set up as described by Mr. *Gandhi*, namely, a Government responsible to the duly elected Legislature. If such a constitution comes into being, it means without doubt the establishment of Hindu and Congress Raj."

GANDHI INVITED TO WRITE

"Nobody will welcome it more than myself if Mr. *Gandhi* is now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League. Let me tell you that will be the greatest day both for Hindus and Muslims. If that is Mr. *Gandhi's* desire, what is there to prevent him from writing direct to me ? (Cheers). Who is there that can prevent him from doing so ? (renewed cheers). What is the use of going to the Viceroy ? Strong as this Government may be in this country, I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me (more cheers). It will be a very serious thing indeed if such a letter were stopped."

Mr. Jinnah proceeded : "Mr. Gandhi gets all the information and knows what is going on. If there is any change of heart on his part, he has only to drop a few lines to me. Then the Muslim League will not fail, whatever may have been our controversy before." (hear, hear and cheers).

Referring to the nature of the Government under Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah declared they visualised it as a people's government. "When we passed the Lahore resolution, we did not use the word Pakistan at all." Mr. Jinnah said : "who gave us this word ? (shouts of "Hindus.") Let me tell you this is their folly. They started damning this on the ground that it was Pakistan. They foisted this word upon us and they talked of Pan-Islamism. We ourselves went on for a long time using the phrase "the Lahore Resolution popularly known as Pakistan". But how long are we to have this long phrase ? I say to Hindu and British friends, we thank you for giving us one word." (cheers).

Deprecating talk of some sort of loose federation, Mr. Jinnah declared : "There is no such thing as a loose federation. When a central federal government is established it will tighten and tighten until the units are pulverised in the matter of real power, and reduced to the same status as Indian States at present."

"We are opposed to any such scheme. It is bound in the long run to lead to certain emasculation of the entire Muslim nation, socially, educationally, culturally, economically and politically and to the establishment of a Hindu majority raj in this sub-continent. Therefore, dismiss from your mind any idea of this kind that might lure you."

Mr. Jinnah gave a warning to "landlords and capitalists who have flourished at our expense by a system which is vicious and wicked," and said : "Believe me, I have seen them, there are millions of our people getting hardly one meal a day. Is this civilisation ? Is this the aim of Pakistan ? (cries of no). If that is going to be the result of Pakistan I will not have it. If these landlords and capitalists are wise they will adjust themselves to the new and modern conditions of life. If they do not God help them. We will not help them." (Cheers).

Proceeding to speak about the British Government, Mr. Jinnah said they had declared the Congress was a rebel organisation, that it was only one party and the overwhelming majority of the people of India was not with the Congress and that the people of India were with the British Government. Having declared Congress an outlaw, what had the Government done to the others ? By their own admission the British were confessing that their desire and anxiety to move in the direction of handing over power to the people was held up successfully by the Congress, which was a rebel organisation. It was a confession of failure on their part. Either the people of India were at the back of the Congress or not. If the overwhelming majority were not—certainly the hundred million Muslims were not—then what was the answer to India ?

The Muslim League had been accused of not helping the war effort. "I say that so far as Muslim India is concerned our cup of bitterness is nearly full. I once more draw the British Government's attention to this. It is a very serious situation indeed, and the British Government ought to be kept informed. I inform them from this platform that the bitterness and disappointment at the shabby treatment meted out to Muslim India is a danger to them (Cheers). Therefore, reconsider your position. Guarantee the Muslim right of self-determination and give a pledge to abide by the plebiscite of Mussalmans for Pakistan."

It was thoroughly dishonest, Mr. Jinnah continued, on the part of the British Government to say that the League were non-co-operating. The Muslim League said it could not co-operate. "You want me to come as a camp follower. What are the prospects for me? If I am defeated, Japan or Hitler will come. If I win, I am to be a camp follower and get a bakshish. Is this an incentive to co-operation ? Can any honourable, respectable nation accept that position? (Cries of no). Therefore, really they have blundered and are blundering or don't want to part with power and are taking their chance, as a gambler does, saying to themselves, "If we win, we will keep them where they are. If we lose, then after us the deluge."

Dwelling on the nature of the constitution under Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah said it would be a constitution which would be framed by the Millat and the people. "See that you make a constitution which is after your heart's desire" he exhorted his audience. The only question was about the minorities. Minorities, he said, were entitled to get definite assurances. Those assurances were part of the Lahore Resolution. The whole history of Islam, the Holy Book of the Prophet

and the policy followed by Muslim Governments were the clearest proof that non-Muslims had been treated not only justly and fairly but generously.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN BILL

Mr. Jinnah commented on the South African Bill and asserted: "There can be no doubt that this legislation is the blackest of its kind. That it should have been undertaken at this stage is amazing" On the one hand, every unit of the Empire was asked to contribute to the war effort and Indians were considered good enough to stand side by side with the whites in the battlefield, but on the other hand, this badge of the colour bar was the reward for one of the members who was contributing her share. He was astonished that the Secretary of State for India should say he had no statement to make, while the whole of India was condemning this Bill, including even the Government of India, which was an agent of the British Government. "Can we not learn a lesson from that with regard to our internal political controversies?"

Mr. Jinnah said things were not at all well in the Indian States in which Hindus were in a majority, such as Kashmir and Kotah. He thought they might set a better example. Similarly, where there was a Muslim Ruler with a Muslim majority he ought to set a good example, and if anything was brought to his notice against a Muslim Ruler, he would be equally grieved.

Mr. Jinnah referred to the emergence of the Muslims as a decisive factor in Modern India and said: "You have to play your role. It is time now to take up the constructive programme, so that we can march along the road that will take us to Pakistan. It is for you to put your heads together and undertake a proper and systematic planning. I can only repeat that we as a nation have got to adopt a real concerted programme for educational, social, economic, cultural and political uplift. I will conclude by saying this. The goal is near us. Stand united, persevere and march forward (cheers)."

Dealing with the freedom movement in India, Mr. Jinnah said that step by step during the last twenty-five years, the Hindu leadership, particularly that of Mr. Gandhi, had alienated the Mussalmans resulting in their demand for the partition of India. Men like Dadabhoi Naoroji and Gokhale had realism and vision. They had a sense of fair play and justice. For instance, Gokhale in 1907 declared: "Confronted by an overwhelming Hindu majority, Muslims are naturally afraid that release from the British yoke might in their case mean enslavement to the Hindus. This fear is not to be ridiculed. Were the Hindus similarly situated as are the Mussalmans in regard to numbers, would they not have entertained similar misgivings?" These were men who inspired Mussalmans with the hope of fair and reasonable adjustment between them and the Hindus.

Then came Mr. Gandhi on the Indian horizon. As early as May 1920, Mr. Gandhi announced that "for me there are no politics but religion. They subserve religion." Mr. Gandhi said that he had been experimenting with himself and his friends in politics "and he has done so with a vengeance", said Mr. Jinnah. Writing in the *Young India* in 1921, Mr. Gandhi defined faith as follows: "I call myself a Sanatani Hindu, because, firstly I believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures and therefore in Avatars and rebirth. Secondly, I believe in the Varnashrama Dharma (law of the caste system) and its Vedic form and thirdly I believe in the protection of the cow as an article of faith, and fourthly I do not disbelieve in idol worship."

Later on in 1924, Mr. Gandhi declared: "It has been whispered that by going so much with Muslim friends I make myself unfit to know the Hindu mind. The Hindu mind is myself and every fibre of my body is Hindu."

"And yet," said Mr. Jinnah, "when I wanted Mr. Gandhi to meet me as a Hindu, he refused to do so." (Laughter). Proceeding, Mr. Jinnah said that from 1925 onwards many efforts were made for the adjustment of the communal issue. Everytime the Mussalmans were the petitioners, standing at the door of Mr. Gandhi and his friends. The Hindus never made any counter proposal. In 1927, the Mussalmans made certain proposals, which were substantially accepted by the Congress at Madras. Two committees then were set up to work out further details. It was Mr. Gandhi who smashed up these committees and forced the Mussalmans to withdraw from them. Then came the Nehru Report which provoked even the one-time Congress leader, Maulana Mohammed Ali, to declare that it would mean the Government of India by the Hindu Mahasabha.

Mr. Jinnah next referred to the Second Round Table Conference where

Mr. *Gandhi* had gone as the sole representative of the Congress. Mr. *Gandhi's* one anxiety was to prevent the scheduled castes getting any special treatment and on that basis alone he was prepared to settle with the Mussalmans. At the Minorities Committee of the R. T. C., Mr. *Gandhi's* observations that a solution of the communal question would follow the establishment of Swaraj, made Mr. *Ramsay Macdonald* to retort, "Be honest and face facts. The communal problem is a problem of fact. Does the problem exist in India or does it not? I do not answer. I leave you honestly to answer it for yourself and to yourselves."

Mr. *Jinnah* next referred to the speech of *Seth Govindas* when, as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Tripuri Session of the Congress, he declared: "Our Congress organisation can be compared to the Fascist Party of Italy, the Nazi Party of Germany and the Communist Party of Russia and *Mahatma Gandhi* occupied the same position among Congressmen as that held by Mussolini among Fascists Hitler among Nazis and Stalin among Communists. The Congress, as at present constituted, is the creation of *Mahatma Gandhi*".

As to the question what Mr. *Gandhi* had done, Mr. *Jinnah* detailed nine *Gandhi* institutions. They were the *Gandhi Ashram*, the *Gandhi Seva Sangha*, the *Gandhi Harijan Seva Sangha*, the *Gandhi Hindi Prachar Sangha*, the *Gandhi Nagri Prachar Sabha*, the *Gandhi Gram Sudhar Sabha*, the *Gandhi Khadi Pratishthan* and the *Gandhi Cow Raksha Sabha*. Mr. *Jinnah* said that the *Gandhi Seva Sangha* was the Mother Superior of all these institutions (laughter.) Mr. *Gandhi*, besides dividing the whole sub-continent of India into three definite parliamentary zones and appointing three parliamentary zone dictators, also gradually developed permanent deputy *Mahatmas* in almost all the provinces and zones. The object of these was nothing less than the production of a new privileged caste of *Gandhists* who alone were thought fit to hold office or rule the country.

ATTITUDE TO FEDERATION

Defining the League's attitude to a "loose federation," Mr. *Jinnah* said: "There are people who talk of some sort of a loose federation. There are people who talk of giving the widest freedom to the federating units and residuary powers resting with the units. But they forget the entire constitutional history of the various parts of the world. Federation, however described and in whatever terms it is put, must ultimately deprive the federating units of authority in all vital matters. The units, despite themselves, would be compelled to grant more and more powers to the central authority until in the end a strong Central Government will have been established by the units themselves and they will be driven to do so by absolute necessity. We are opposed to any such scheme, nor can we agree to any proposal which has for its basis any conception or idea of a Central Government, federal or confederal, for it is bound to lead in the long run to the emasculation of the entire Muslim nation, socially and politically, and to the establishment of Hindu majority Raj in this sub-continent."

Resolutions—2nd, Day—New Delhi—25th. April 1943

The second sitting of the open session of the League commenced on the 25th. April 1943, Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* presiding.

The proceedings opened with the presenting of the annual report by the Honorary Secretary, *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*.

The report explained in detail the events leading to the rejection of the Cripps' proposals. It paid a tribute to Mr. *C. Rajagopalachari* for his foresight and political sagacity in his attempts to persuade the Congress to concede the principle of self-determination to the Mussalmans and to the discipline and solidarity of Mussalmans particularly in keeping aloof from the Congress movement of August last.

The League, said the report, had no opportunity to solve the deadlock. On the one side, the Government kept the door locked and on the other side, Congress remained adamant. The report also referred to the activities of the Muslim League Defence Committee. The other outstanding achievements of the year were the establishment of Ministries in Sind and Bengal and conversion of the weekly *Dawn* into a daily paper.

The session adopted a condolence resolution on the death of *Sir Abdulla Haroon* and *Sir Sikander Hyat Khan*.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN BILL

Mr. *Z. H. Lari* next moved the resolution on South Africa.

By this resolution, the Muslim League "strongly condemns the Trading and

Occupation of Land (Natal and Transvaal) Bill passed by the South African Parliament and makes it clear that, if the Bill is assented to by the Crown, it will lead to the gravest breach between the Indians and South Africans and will go to sap the foundations of the future of the Commonwealth of Nations. The session urges on the Government of India to intervene in the matter immediately and calls upon the Union Government to refrain from enforcing the Bill and convene an R. T. C. between the Government of India and the Union Government to explore all possible methods of arriving at an amicable settlement of the situation that has arisen. It is the considered opinion of the Muslim League that the only solution of the Indian problem in South Africa is the enfranchisement of Indian settlers there. The session urges upon the Government of India that in case the Union Government fails to convene the R. T. C. immediately and enforces the Bill they should examine the position with a view to bringing into operation forthwith some of the provisions of the Reciprocity Act recently passed by the Indian Central Legislature."

Mr. Lari said India could never neglect the interests of her nationals abroad. Although India was not in a position to effectively protect such interest on account of her present dependent position, yet the course of protest was open to her. He explained the history of the Indian problem in South Africa and said that Indians were being humiliated in that country. He hoped the Union Government would see the wisdom of agreeing to the demand for holding a Round Table Conference. If to-day we were not listened to, the day was not far off when we would be able to retaliate against the ill-treatment of our nationals.

Sir Raza Ali, Government of India's former Agent-General in South Africa, seconding the resolution said that the condition of Indians in South Africa was pitiable. He criticised the speech of Field-Marshal Smuts in support of the "Pegging" Bill and observed that while on the one hand he was conscious of the delicacy of the situation, yet it made no difference to his determination to see the Bill through. The South African Premier had suave words for Indians but his action was altogether different. Had India been free her nationals would not have been treated like this. The resolution was unanimously carried.

FOOD SITUATION

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed moved the following resolution on food :—

"Whereas the Government is responsible for the supply of necessities of life to the people of India—specially during war time when the movement of merchandise is controlled entirely by the Government—whereas the marked disparity between prices fixed by the Government for their own purchases and the prices at which the civil population is forced to buy the same articles is against all sound theories of economics and leads to corruption, black markets and exploitation of the public, whereas the policy of control as devised and practised by the capitalists, traders and manufacturers in the name of the Government has failed to achieve its purpose, is encouraging hoarding and abnormal profiteering and causing misery to the people in general and the poorer classes in particular, the Muslim League urges on the Government of India the necessity of framing their policy of control and distribution of the necessities of life not so much in consultation with capitalists and officials as in consultation with the representatives of the people and of ensuring that (1) necessities of life are made available to the people and are not locked up by distributors (2) they are sold at reasonable prices providing economic profit to the producers (3) distributors are selected from all classes of people and (4) retail shops are opened in every quarter of a town.

"The Muslim League further demands that the representatives of the people, specially of the Muslim League, should be associated with the officials and capitalists at every stage in the planning and execution of schemes of production and distribution."

Sir Ziauddin said that the Government had no courage to face textile interests and cotton piecegoods were being sold at abnormally high prices while the scheme for standard cloth had been in the making for the last two years. Coal was another article in the control of which the Government had greatly bungled, particularly because consumers' interests had not been consulted. As for food grains, the Government controlled the prices without controlling the supplies. The system of distribution was equally defective. If the present conditions continued he was afraid the worst sufferers would be the Mussalmans and the poorer classes in India. It was bound to weaken the home front.

Supporting the resolution, *Mr Hoosain Imam* said that the Government was

completely divorced from public opinion. The business were only actuated by profit-making incentive and not by human feelings. The price of standard cloth had been increased by 25 per cent even before the cloth had been placed on the market. He regretted that the Government had not effectively dealt with the profiteers and industrialists in the same way they had dealt with the political agitators. The resolution was passed.

COLLECTIVE FINES

Syed Zakir Ali moved the resolution on collective fines *vis-a-vis* Mussalmans. This resolution recorded "emphatic protest against (1) imposition of collective fines on the Mussalmans notwithstanding the Government's clear declaration that Mussalmans kept strictly aloof from the subversive movement launched by the Congress and (2) non-exemption of the Mussalmans from collective security orders which have been passed as a punitive measure."

Syed Zakir Ali said that defence committees had been set up all over India before August last. The result was that through the efforts of these defence committees, Mussalmans were successfully kept away from the Congress movement. He added the following to the resolution: "The policy of issuing licenses for the sale and distribution of foodstuffs and other necessities of life to the overwhelmingly non-Muslim dealers and demands that the collective fines realized from the Mussalmans be remitted and they may be exempted from the operation of the orders regarding collective security and watch and ward and urges the issue of licenses to Muslim dealers in due proportion."

Mr. *Padshah* supported the resolution and said that in Madras a Mussalman has to prove his alibi before he could be exempted.

The resolution was further supported by *Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ismail* of Bihar and was adopted. The session then adjourned.

Resolutions—3rd. Day—New Delhi—26th. April 1943

EXECUTION OF PIR PAGARO

The third and last sitting of the League started on the 26th. April 1943. Mr. *Jinnah* was in the chair.

Maulana *Abdul Hamid Badauni* moved his resolution about the execution of Pir Pagaro. Nawabzada *Liaquat Ali Khan* seconded and the session adopted it unanimously. The resolution stated: "This session of the All-India Muslim League deplores the unjustifiable action of the Government inasmuch as retrospective effect was given to Martial Law and Pir Pagaro was tried by the Martial Law Court instead of by the normal judicial tribunal of the land for offences alleged to have been committed before the introduction of Martial Law in the areas of Sind concerned and the sentence of death passed against him by such a Court was executed." The Nawabzada, in a brief speech, said that incident depicted an act of injustice.

MARTIAL LAW IN SIND

A second resolution concerning Martial Law in Sind was moved by *Mustapha Shah Gilani* urging the authorities to entrust the properties and treasures of Pir Pagaro to a Committee to be appointed by the Sind Government. The speaker alluded to the difference in treatment meted out to the Hurs and the Congress, "both of whom were, in the eyes of the Government, rebels," and asked why it was so. The resolution was supported by Nawab *Siddiq Ali Khan M. L. A.* (Central) and was unanimously passed.

The third resolution protesting against the continuance of Martial Law in Sind was moved by Mr. *G. M. Syed*, who traced the unrest in Sind to the Allah Bux Ministry. He said the law-abiding section of the population were suffering great hardships on account of the continuance of Martial Law. He demanded its immediate withdrawal and hoped that the Government of India would accede to this demand.

Mr. *S. H. Abdul Majid Sindhi* said the present Martial Law unlike past practice was not preceded by a Proclamation by the Governor-General. He said it was still not known under what authority or provision of the Government of India Act Martial Law was enforced. No satisfactory explanation had been forthcoming from the Government. The resolution was carried.

The Honorary Secretary, Nawabzada *Liaquat Ali Khan*, through a resolution, reconstituted a committee of women for the purpose of propagating the League's programme amongst Muslim women.

The Nawabzada also announced certain amendments to the Constitution of the League. The session approved the amendments.

DECLARATION REGARDING PAKISTAN

Chowdhury. Khaliquazzaman moved the main resolution of the session, which was as follows:

"This session of the All-India Muslim League views with concern and grave apprehension the failure of the British Government to make an explicit declaration asked for in the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, in Bombay, on the 20th of August 1942.

"Since that resolution was passed, the speeches and statements made by responsible British statesmen, both in England and in India lead to the conviction that not only the declaration such as was asked for will not be forthcoming but that some kind of federal constitution, not necessarily on the model embodied in the Act of 1935 is under contemplation. This session, therefore, warns the British Government in all earnestness that the imposition of such a federal constitution will be resisted by Muslim India with all its might, which will inevitably result in strife, bloodshed and misery, the responsibility for which will rest on the British Government alone.

"This session of the All-India Muslim League is convinced that the attainment of the cherished goal of Pakistan is only possible by the untiring effort, willing sacrifices and grim determination of the Muslims, add they should therefore do their utmost to acquire the strength requisite for such an undertaking."

Chowdhury Khaliquazzaman said that the resolution was self-explanatory. He traced the history of the constitutional deadlock since the beginning of the war *vis-a-vis* the Congress attitude towards the Muslims. The Congress, he said, focussed its attention on the future and demanded a declaration of war aims and peace aims. The League, on the other hand, declared that it was prepared to share in the mobilisation of the war effort on the basis of equality. Then came the August Declaration of 1940, which made it clear that no constitution would be acceptable to the British Government unless it had the approval of the Muslims. That put up the back of the Congress which started "individual civil disobedience."

The Bombay resolution of August 20th, 1942, *inter alia* demanded of the British Government an unequivocal declaration, without delay, guaranteeing to the Mussalmans the right of self-determination and to pledge themselves that they will abide by the verdict of a plebiscite of Mussalmans and give effect to the Pakistan scheme in consonance with the basic principles laid down by the Lahore resolution of the All-India Muslim League, passed in March 1940. By the Bombay resolution the League also expressed itself ready and willing to consider any proposals and negotiate with any party on a footing of equality for the setting up of a provisional Government of India in order to mobilise the resources of the country for the purpose of the defence of India and the successful prosecution of the war, provided the demands of Muslim India as indicated above are conceded unequivocally.

"MUSLIMS WILL NOT ACCEPT FEDERATION"

The Cripps scheme conceded self-determination on provincial basis, which led to the "Quit India Movement." The suppression of the Congress had changed the attitude of the British and their spokesmen had started the slogan of 'India geographically one.' The Hindus would prefer to rot in jail rather than settle with the Muslims. The Muslims, meanwhile, were becoming stronger. Their Ministries had been set up in four Provinces and would soon be established in the fifth. He made it clear that the Muslims would never accept federation or confederation or any improved constitution. The Muslims could not be fooled and did not believe in non-violence. He challenged the British that they would never be able to impose any federal or confederal constitution on the Muslims, nor would the Muslims ever go again before the British with a beggar's bowl for concession. They would have free Governments in their majority Provinces and would see how the British imposed their will on them. The Muslim minorities in the Congress Provinces made it impossible for the Congress to govern them without going to jail. They, the Muslims, knew the art and could defeat with success any attempt of the British to impose any unwanted constitution on them.

Mr. *Gazder*, seconding the resolution, characterised it as revolutionary. It was clear that no nation got freedom by merely asking for it. He exhorted the Muslims to get ready to make sacrifices, for it was only by sacrifices that they would achieve their goal. The Muslims were not going to beg for their freedom.

PUNJAB PREMIER'S SUPPORT

The *Punjab Premier*, amid loud cheers, rose to support the resolution. He said his last statement, made at the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, was before the public. He assured them that the Punjab Muslims were with their brothers of the other Provinces and if any obstacles were put either by the British or the Congress in the way of the legitimate and reasonable demands of the Muslims, the Punjab Muslims would not lag behind others in making sacrifices. He reminded them that the Lahore resolution of the League was passed in the land of the five rivers. Their right of self-determination was not unjust, and he assured the Hindus and Sikhs and other minorities that they need have no fear of the usurpations of their rights and claims.

Mr. *Abdul Hamid Khan* (Madras) further supported the resolution. The first part of the resolution dealt with the period of negotiations during which the Muslim League made its demand from the Government and the Congress. The Congress summarily rejected their demand, and made the claim to speak for the whole of India. The Congress denied the Muslims right of self-determination. The British had changed their tune after they had put the Congress in-jail. They had not shown any response to the Muslim demand. On the other hand, recent indications had created apprehensions among the Muslims that some form of federal constitution was under contemplation for India.

Mr. *Abdul Matin Chaudhri* (Assam Minister) further supported the resolution. He said the Congress movement of August last was not only against the British but was also against the Muslims of India, whom the Congress wanted to dominate. The Muslims kept aloof from the Congress movement. The resolution demanded of Muslims to stand on their feet. It declared Muslim opposition to any imposed constitution and he assured the session that they would have the full support of Assam Muslims.

Sardar Aurangzeb Khan (N. W.F.) further supporting the resolution, said that the Muslims were a separate nation and were entitled to their homelands. The Muslims were for free India and free Pakistan. It was their birthright and they shall have it. The cup of Muslim patience had overflowed and the result was the resolution. They, the Muslims, should lose no time and like Turkey of to-day should organise themselves in every village and town to face the danger.

Moulvi Latifur Rahman (Bihar), supporting the resolution, said that their religion was the bond which kept them together. He assured the audience of the full support of Bihar Muslims to their efforts to win Pakistan.

Maulana Akram Khan, President, Bengal Muslim League, gave full support to the resolution on behalf of the Muslims of his province. He said that the time for begging for Pakistan had passed by. The time for grim determination and organisation of the Muslims had arrived in order to achieve their goal of Pakistan. If, according to the Koran, one was killed for his ideal, he became a "Shahid", a martyr. He said that the colouring of the map into Pakistan and Hindustan would soon disappear, as every country belonged to the Muslims, because every country belonged to God."

Sir *A. K. Dehlavi* from Bombay said that there was no need of a speech on behalf of the Bombay Presidency from which the Qaide-Azam came. He said the Muslims did not envisage "non-violent non-co-operation" to fight the imposition of a form of constitution detrimental to their interest, but would adopt methods which had been employed in the past for winning freedom.

Qazi Isa Khan (Baluchistan), said that the resolution did not imply a reiteration of the Pakistan demand but it was a further step towards their goal. The resolution demanded solid work. It was an ultimatum to the British Government because the Muslims knew that their non-Muslim brethren were powerless to give anything to them. The power was held by the British and the ultimatum was, therefore, directed to the British. He appealed to Muslims to be ready to fight and die for their ideal. He had full confidence in the capacity of Muslims. He derided H. E. the Viceroy's reference to "India's geographical unity" and Mr. Amery's reference to the days when Akbar ruled and said Muslims would be only too pleased to be restored to the position they held in Akbar's days. He said their hand of friendship was extended for co-operation with the British on the basis of equality, but they were not prepared to have any humiliating pact. To say that the masses of India were with the British Government was a lie. He described the Muslim Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council as Quislings and not representatives of Muslims in any sense.

Nawab Sir. *Mohd Yusuf* (United Provinces) said the resolution was the pith of Mr. *Jinnah's* presidential address. The Muslims wanted the right of self-determination to be conceded to them and they would oppose all constitutions which denied this. *Syed Rauf Shah* (Central Provinces) said a living nation was not afraid of death and attainment of Pakistan by the help of the others was "tantamount to going to hell." *Begum Aizaz Rasul*, supporting the resolution, remarked that it seemed when all Provinces were exhausted, it was the turn of the women. In other words, the women came last of all.

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali, interjecting, said : "No. Women were dominating every Province." *Begum Rasul* assured that Muslim women were alive to their share of responsibility and were ready to make all sacrifices. They would resist any imposition of a constitution which went against the interests of Muslims and would assist the men as Muslim women used to help men in times of crisis in the early days of Islamic history.

The *Raja of Mahmudabad* said that for the Muslims the means justified the end and not *vice-versa*. Sacrifice was incumbent on Muslims, when they saw that Islam was in danger. As the President of the Muslim Students' Federation he exhorted the youth to get ready for sacrifices.

The resolution was carried with acclamation.

ARAB INDEPENDENCE

The following resolution was then put from the chair and adopted :—

"This session of the All-India Muslim League views with great concern and alarm the new Zionist propaganda and move in U. S. A. which is putting pressure on the U. S. A. Government for exercising its influence with the British Government firstly to remove all present restrictions on Jewish immigration in Palestine and secondly to adopt the policy of converting Palestine into a Jewish State. In the opinion of this session the aim of this new Zionist move is to make Jewish majority in Palestine a *fait accompli* by opening her doors to the Jewish war refugees on the ground of war emergency and prosecution of the Jews in Europe.

"This session condemns this new move as a deliberate attempt to perpetuate a wrong on the Arab and Islamic world at a time when the Arab National Higher Committee of Palestine stands disowned and the Arab nationalists are at present almost defenceless against organised Jewry and high finance in the world.

"This session reiterating its demands for the fulfilment of Arab national demands for Arab independence in Palestine and Syria, solemnly warns the British Government against any step or move which may prove detrimental to Arab national interests and declares that such a policy will be bitterly resented by the whole Arab and Islamic world as an outrage on democracy and justice and inalienable Arab rights to their homelands."

NEW POWERS FOR PRESIDENT

Mian Bashir Ahmad proposed, and *Khan Bakht Jamal* seconded, and *Maulana Jamal Mya* supported the resolution empowering the President, Mr. *Jinnah*, till the next session of the League, to take every step or action as he may consider necessary in furtherance of and relating to the objects of the Muslim League, as he deems proper, provided they are consistent with the principles, policy and goal of the League or any resolutions expressly passed by the session of the All-India Muslim League. The resolution was unanimously carried.

MR. JINNAH'S REMARKS

Mr. *Jinnah*, in adjourning the session, declared that there was no map of Pakistan to which the Muslim League was committed directly or indirectly. They were attempts by individuals to which the League was not committed.

Similarly there was no scheme of Pakistan to which the League was committed directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever, except the Lahore Resolution. Mr. *Jinnah* said : "I know many attempts are being made by our opponents to father upon us some scheme or map and 'hang the dog after giving it a bad name'. I will say give up these futile attempts."

With the approval of the House, Mr. *Jinnah* announced that the next session of the League will be held in Sind during Christmas.

Mr. *Jinnah* said that the Delhi session was a historic session held in a historic city and had passed a resolution, which was a turning point in their history. He was glad to say that the session had attracted the biggest audience so far at any session of the League.

The All India Momin Conference

Eighth Session—New Delhi—26th. to 28th. April 1943

Presidential Address

The eighth session of the All-India Momin Conference was held in the Queen's Gardens, New Delhi on the 26th. April 1943. Over 15,000 persons including 1,500 delegates and 800 Ansar volunteers attended. Those present included Mr. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, Mr. A. Sayeed, Mr. A. A. Mohmed Noon, M.L.C. (Bihar), Mr. Reyazuddin Ahmed, Mr. Zahir-ul-Huq, Mr. Nizam-ud-Din, Haji Abdul Kadir and Kasim Latafat.

The flag-hoisting ceremony was performed in the evening by Mr. Abdul Mohmed Noon who asked the audience to respect their flag and unite under the banner to protect the rights of the Momins.

Mr. Zahir-ud-din, President, in the course of his address said :—

"The solution of the Indian problem should be the just care of the United Nations. Prestige may dilate, but statesmanship demands that the old notions must be discarded and a fresh attempt made to gratify the national aspirations of India." The President refuted the claim of the Muslim League to represent the entire Muslim community. He called it "wrong", "mischievous" and "misleading". He claimed that four and a half crores of Momins were definitely not with the Muslim League and their Pakistan scheme. Speaking against the Pakistan scheme, Mr. Zahir-ud-din said: "If Pakistan is attained by the Muslim League, it will prove detrimental to the interests of the Muslims. The Muslim minorities in Hindu India will become like Moplahs and Hurs and I am confident that the Pakistans will not come to the aid of the Muslims in minority Provinces."

"India must define her attitude towards the war. It is true that there has been a favourable response towards the British Government's call for co-operation in the war effort but this response does not indicate the spirit to win or die, which would otherwise mobilise all the forces of Indian nationalism on the side of the Allies and sweep away the entire strength of the Axis powers and wreck the entire war machine which has challenged civilization."

Mr. Zahir-ud-din added: "The present policy of inaction and indecision is becoming increasingly unpalatable to a large majority of those who are keenly conscious of the Government's failure to end the deadlock in the country. The policy of sitting on the fence exhibits bankruptcy of statesmanship and their attitude to Mahatma Gandhi's release exposed their false political facade in entirety. This political disguise should now go. They should declare their faith in co-operation, unconditional and unfettered. Even the policy of the Congress is nothing but one of frustration and desperation. We want that the Government should enable Congress leadership to review the present situation in the light of recent events and thus make room for rapprochement."

Concluding, the President condemned the attitude of the Government of South Africa regarding the colour bar and said: "It is one of the blackest spots in history. It is a wonder that the Bill is being passed by the South Africa Government at a time when the Allies have declared to the whole world that they are fighting for freedom, fair-play and justice. The British Government should hang down its head in shame and cease to talk of a British Commonwealth of Free Nations. South Africa must take note that India will never forget these wrongs done to her."

Resolutions—2nd. Day—New Delhi—27th. April 1943

On the next day, the 27th April, the Subjects Committee met and discussed resolutions.

A condolence resolution on the death of Begum Azad was adopted. Mr. Zahirudin, while moving the resolution from the chair, expressed regret at the attitude of the Government in not allowing Maulana Azad to see his wife before her death.

PAKISTAN CONDEMNED

By another resolution the Conference reiterated its claim to represent four and a half crores of Momins. According to the Conference no other party or organisation had any right to represent the Momins. Therefore no constitutional or political agreement would be accepted by the Momins which did not have the support of the All-India Momin Conference.

Mr. *Taj-ud-din* condemned the Pakistan scheme of the Muslim League and said that India was indivisible and was one nation. To divide India would mean disaster for the country. A majority of Muslims, namely, the Momin Conference, the Azad Muslim Conference and other organisations represented over eight crores of Muslims who were definitely against Pakistan and would fight tooth and nail if such a scheme ever came into force.

The Momin Conference was of the view that the primary members of the Momin Conference should not be allowed to become members of any other political organisation.

Resolutions—3rd. Day—New Delhi—28th. April 1943

COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA

The Conference concluded to-day at 1 a. m. after passing a number of resolutions. The main resolution of the session which was moved by Mr. *A. Syed*, runs as follows :

"Since the present phase of the war has created immense complications, regarding the political problem in India, baffling its real solution, and every political organisation is in the paramount interest of the country, trying to address itself to find an earliest possible solution and in view of the past traditional policies as also the present ideologies of each political body, these political parties have assumed an attitude of arrogant obduracy, with the result that the Indian problem has reached a state of stalemate and has become static, the Working Committee of the All-India Momin Conference feel, in the circumstances and in the best interest of all concerned, that they should make their contribution to the solution of the Indian tangle and are of the opinion that the best way to resolve this stalemate lies in maintaining the political unity and integrity of India in its future constitution, which should aim at the combination of practically independent provincial units having residuary powers under one centre which should be only vested with such powers as all the provincial units would, without impairing their individual independence, unanimously entrust to it.

"It further resolves that the complete independence of India is the goal of the Conference and demands of the Government a proclamation that soon after the end of the war India would be given complete independence."

INDIAN INTEREST IN SOUTH AFRICA

By another resolution, the Conference strongly urged the Government of India to recall their High Commissioner from South Africa as an initial measure of protest against the high-handed and intolerable action against Indians. It further urged the Government to resort to retaliatory measures against the South African Nationals in the same manner and on the same scale as the discriminatory legislation which had been enacted against the Indians by the South African Government.

The resolution was moved by Mr. *Abdul Qayum Ansari*.

RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

By the third resolution, the Conference expressed the view that the Government of India should make a bold declaration and release all the political prisoners and the detenus forthwith and set up a national government at the centre, represented by various political parties, thereby mobilising public opinion and the resources of the country to its full capacity.

The Conference gave full powers to its Working Committee to co-operate with any political party or organisation if and when any occasion arose.

"SWARAJ CANNOT WAIT"

Explaining the objectives of the All-India Momin Conference, Mr. *Sheikh Mohamed Zahiruddin*, President, in a talk to press representatives, said : "We believe that Hindu-Muslim unity can wait but not Swaraj. The amelioration of 45 millions of Momins (Muslim weavers) in India, who are in the same position in the Muslim community as the depressed classes are among Hindus, is only possible under Swaraj." One reason why he believed Swaraj would bring betterment of their condition was that under Swaraj there would be adult suffrage and with adult suffrage they could have adequate representation and voice in the legislatures.

Mr. *Zahiruddin* did not believe that the Muslim League had either mass appeal or cared very much for the common people or had sympathy for any programme of uplift of the underdog. He left the League on this issue. When

later, friends urged him to bring about a rapprochement between the League and the Momin Conference, he wrote a letter to Mr. *Jinnah* enquiring whether the League had any intention of a change in its attitude towards the masses. He received no reply.

Apart from the difference in the attitude towards the common people, the Momin Conference strongly opposed Pakistan. For one thing he was convinced that under Pakistan the difficulties of Muslims in Hindu provinces would be intensified.

This session of the Momin Conference, Mr. *Zahiruddin* continued, decided to sever all connection with the Congress as well as with the League. One reason was they were anxious to give no semblance of justification for the charge that Momins were working with the Congress to divide the Muslim community. The Momin Conference was nevertheless in agreement with the Congress in its ideal of complete independence for India and could co-operate with any political body which had the same ideals.

The positive political aim of the Conference, Mr. *Zahiruddin* said, had been declared to be as follows : The political unity and integrity of India to be maintained ; residuary powers to be given to the Provinces ; the Centre to have such powers as are entrusted to it by the Provinces by unanimous agreement. The Conference had some 500 committees in districts and villages, particularly in the U. P. and Bihar, where the bulk of the community was concentrated. The immediate objective of the Conference was to agitate for the betterment of the social and other conditions of the Momins. He expressed keen disappointment with the absence of a Momin representative on the Fact Finding Committee with regard to the handloom industry, although as weavers their interest in the committee's work was obviously intimate.

Mr. *Zahiruddin* alleged that obstacles were placed in the way of the present session of the Conference by the Muslim League enthusiasts, who he said, went to the length of sending fake telegrams to the delegates, telling them that the session had been postponed or that epidemics had broken out here. However, they saw through the game and came to the session, which was a success. Some 4,000 people had been waiting in Delhi from April 23 for the Conference, and of these, some had to leave, because they could not be away from their places for more than three or four days.

Working Committee—Cawnpore—19th. to 21st. June 1943

JINNAH'S ATTITUDE CONDEMNED

The Working Committee of the All India Momin Conference met at Cawnpore on the 19th, 20th and 21st June, 1943. The Committee deplored the attitude and action of Mr. *Jinnah* in connection with *Mahatma Gandhi's* letter and regarded it as a challenge to the spirit and tradition of Islamic chivalry and love of freedom and as a blot on the good and fair name of the Muslim League and in a way of the whole Muslim nation. Further, the committee felt that this attitude had put back the hands of the clock of the country's efforts for an early settlement of the Indian problem.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT URGED

The Committee declared that with a view to accelerate the war effort and ensure complete and willing co-operation of the country therein the Government should release all political prisoners and focus attention on the formation of a national Government at the Centre representing all important elements of Indian national life.

The Committee nominated a sub-committee including the President, *Sheikh Zahir-ud-Din* and the General Secretary to tour independent native States and study and report on the conditions and requirements of their Momin subjects.

CO-OFFERATION IN WAR EFFORT

The Government of India was requested to nominate a representative of the Momin Conference on the Textile Advisory Board to be shortly established by the Government. The Committee resolved to wait in a deputation on the Commerce Member and His Excellency the Viceroy with a view to discuss how best the resources of the Momin Ansari community could be harnessed to the war effort. The Committee deplored the indifference of the Central Government in not utilizing so far the resources of the Momin community in manpower, skilled and unskilled labour.

The All India Majlis-i-Ahrar

Council Meeting—Saharanpur—29th. April 1943

NEED FOR PEACE AND MUTUAL CONFIDENCE

The council of the All-India Majlis-i-Ahrar after prolonged discussion at Saharanpur on the 29th. April 1943 adopted a resolution expressing the view that the complicated problem of Indian politics could be solved only through peace and mutual confidence between the people inhabiting this country. The council appealed to the protagonists of the schemes of Akhand Bharat, Pakistan and Azad Punjab, to proceed on lines of mutual goodwill and understanding and expressed the opinion that if any party believed that it could establish any such scheme with the British aid, should not ignore the fact that any scheme set up under the auspices of the British would lead to the country's perpetual enslavement. The Majlis-i-Ahrar therefore, had no interest in any scheme, the success of which depended on the assistance of the British.

The resolution further stated that the Majlis-i-Ahrar was not prepared to ignore the fact that friendly negotiations and peaceful atmosphere were conditions precedent to the final decision whether one or more centres were to be established in India or whether its provinces were to retain their present boundaries. The Majlis-i-Ahrar considered all provocative propaganda already done or being done by any party was fatal to the interests of the future of India or the establishment of Akhand Bharat or Pakistan or Azad Punjab. It, therefore, appealed to the protagonists of these schemes to refrain from speeches, writings and other types of propaganda likely to poison the atmosphere in the country.

OFFICE BEARERS

The council elected the following office-bearers:—*Sheikh Hasam-ud-Din* of Amritsar, president; *Maulana Mohd. Ahmad Kazmi*, and *Maulana Ghulam Ghaus*, vice-presidents and *Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar*. M. L. A. (Punjab), general secretary.

The U. P. Majlis-i-Ahrar

Annual Session—Saharanpur—27th. April 1943

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Presiding over the annual session of the provincial Majlis-i-Ahrar, U. P., held at Saharanpur on the 27th. April 1943, *Maulana Ghulam Ghaus* declared that complete independence of India was the goal of the Majlis-i-Ahrar. He said that his party was prepared to cooperate with any other party whose object was the same as that of the Ahrars.

Speaking about Pakistan, the president said that if Hindus tried to establish Hindu 'raj' in India, Muslims would be compelled to establish Muslim 'raj' which they would achieve with unity and strength. The Ahrars, he continued, were eager to live in cooperation with other communities, as their ideal was equality of man, but neither were they prepared to relinquish their rights, nor ready to deprive others of their legitimate rights.

Explaining the difference between the policy of the Muslim League and that of his party, the president said that the Muslim League's aim was 'to divide first and then take', while the Ahrars' principle was 'to take first and then divide'.

Concluding the president criticised the Congress policy. He said if the Congress was anxious to settle amicably the question of Muslim rights, why did *Mahatma Gandhi* hesitate to approach other Muslim organisations in the country when Mr. *Jinnah* had refused to negotiate. That was one of the reasons, added the president, why Ahrars did not follow the Congress programme.

The Punjab Majlis-i-Ahrar

Presidential Address—Lyallpur—31st. March 1943

"The Ahrars are not satisfied with the present conception of Pakistan. They do not want a geographical division of India. Their conception of Pakistan is a form of Government based on the law of Shariat, "*Hakumat-i-Illahia*", which means a constitution based on equality and fraternity", declared *Nawabzada*

Mahmood Ali of the U. P. while presiding over the Provincial Ahrar Conference held at Lyallpur on the 31st. March 1943.

He proceeded : “The question of Indian independence is also our first concern and we will not like the issue of independence to be obstructed by any other cry”.

Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar, M. L. A., condemned the cries of Akhand Hindustan, Pakistan and Azad Punjab and said that those cries were based on hatred and contempt for one another. So long as the British Government was there, he added, those cries had no meaning and it was the will of the Government which would finally prevail.

The Conference passed a few resolutions. The main resolution about Pakistan was discussed at great length in the Subjects Committee, but as there was great divergence of views on the issue, it was decided to postpone the decision till the session of the All-India Ahrar Conference.

The All India Akali Conference

4th. Session—Bhowanigarh—14th. March 1943

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

“Great men are apt to make great mistakes and great men have made great mistakes. What other remarks can an onlooker pass upon the incidents of the last year. Neither the Government nor the Congress wanted victory of Japan; yet the incidents of last summer did not contribute to the defeat of Japan,” observed *Master Tara Singh*, in the course of his presidential Address, delivered at the 4th All India Akali Conference held at Bhowanigarh on the 14th. March 1943.

The President further said : “If the British Government was sincere last year, nothing can change its attitude towards our freedom. Why cannot the British Government give India what it was prepared to give last year? Let not the Government create an impression that it gives freedom only under threat. There is no threat at present from inside or outside and now is the time for the Government to prove its sincerity and make a great offer. Of course the Cripps proposal of Pakistan should not be repeated. It will only create fresh heart-burning and fresh controversy. His proposal of establishing a National Government immediately without commitment to any permanent solution of communal problem after the war, should be carried. I know the Cripps-Congress negotiations broke on the right of veto to be given to His Excellency the Viceroy. Certainly there can be found some via media, provided great men are now prepared to make great corrections. There is no doubt that the British Government cannot part with such power just at present as it may tell upon war efforts. Successful prosecution of war is the primary concern not only of the Indian people also. When we agree upon fundamentals, it is not at all difficult to agree upon minor points. I may point out here that release of political prisoners, accompanied by establishment of a National Government, will clear the whole atmosphere in India at the psychological moment.”

Referring to Azad Punjab he said : “By the creation of Azad Punjab not only Sikhs and the Hindus of the Azad Punjab will get rid of the present Pakistan, but the Sikhs and the Hindus living in the portion of the Punjab which will be cut off from the present Punjab will also be in a better position. According to my calculations the Sikh and Hindu population in that portion will be about 5 per cent and 12 per cent. They will get weightage on the principle upon which it is given to the minorities in other provinces. This means that the Sikhs will get 15 per cent seats in the legislature and the Hindus at least 25 per cent. This makes their total 40 per cent, while at present the Sikhs and the Hindus both together have only 47 per cent representation in the Legislative Assembly. This 40 per cent will not include any Hindu Jat or Achhut. The common economic and cultural interest of these 40 per cent will create cohesion amongst them and so they will be in a better position to safeguard their interests than they are in the present Punjab where 47 percent Sikh and Hindu representatives consist of so many conflicting elements. The mentality of the Jats and Achhuts who in the present Punjab always support the Muslims in order to gain some advantage,

will change in the Azad Punjab; for they have no natural sympathy for the Muslims. By this device of changing the boundaries of the Punjab, we can take out overwhelming majority of the Hindus and the Sikhs from Muslim domination, while at the same time improving appreciably the position of the Sikhs and the Hindus who remain in the other portion of the Punjab."

If any Hindu gentleman convinces me that the scheme is disadvantageous to the Hindus, I would give it up. But I have no doubt that the scheme is advantageous to both the Hindus and the Sikhs.

A. I. Akhand Hindusthan Conference

Annual Session—Lahore—6th. June 1943

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

"I can make absolutely no distinction between Pakistan and Azad Punjab. Both are schemes for the vivisection of India and both cut at the roots of its unity and integrity. One is irresistibly driven to the conclusion that the safety of the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab lies in uniting together and becoming determined not to let Muslim communal raj be established in the Punjab in any form." Thus observed *Sardar Kharak Singh* in the course of his presidential address at the All-India Akhand Hindusthan Conference which opened at the Minto Park, Lahore on the 6th, June 1943.

S. Pritam Singh Bhatia, Chairman, Reception Committee, extending a welcome to all those present at the conference criticised what he described as the weak leadership of the Akalis which is unfortunately misleading the Panth." He pointed out that one seat on the Aurangzeb Ministry was the price which had been paid "for selling the Sikhs and for political dishonesty." He maintained that even though the Sikhs had a different religion it was foolish to contend that they had nothing to do with the Hindus with whom they had common ties of social and political relations.

Sardar Kharak Singh in his address, which was read by someone else said:

"It is indeed extremely painful that at the critical post-war era India would not be free to play her full part. Great Britain claims to be a champion of democracy and freedom for small nations but it is not ready to set India free. According to the statement of the Secretary of State for India himself, more than 35,000 Indians were either imprisoned or held under internment in March last. This clearly shows what the future intentions of British Government about India are. But nevertheless there is no dearth of Indians who are ready to co-operate with the Government. Sir Homy Mody, Mr. Aney and Mr. Sirkar had hardly laid down their offices as Executive Councillors of the Viceroy, in protest against the repressive policy of the Government before. *Dr. Khare*, *Sir Aziz-ul Huq* and *Sir Ashok Kumar* have come in to take their places. Even now the Muslim League is busy in forming ministries in the provinces where a complete deadlock existed. Such a ministry has been set up in the N. W. F. P. also. It is very regrettable that even a Sikh has been found ready to join that ministry and provide an occasion to others to say that the Sikhs who were so loud in their opposition of Pakistan are now joining hands with its protagonists to facilitate its establishment.

"I have never been enamoured of this so-called provincial autonomy. To me it looks like a farce. That is why I have always been opposed to office acceptance. In my opinion the legislative assemblies and ministries can have little sense until we are independent. I really cannot understand the mentality of those who seem to consider that the salvation of their country or community lies in these institutions alone. I will not make here any comment about those who conscientiously hold the above opinion. But the action of those who enter the Assemblies with the declared object of wrecking the Ministries, and on a seat being offered to them in the cabinet begin co-operating with it quietly, cannot but be considered as most dangerous. And yet it is this kind of people who pass as leaders of the Panth. They carried on what appeared like a most ruthless campaign to wreck the Sikan-der Ministry but when they were given a seat in his cabinet their opinion about it changed. These people have no principle at all. They consider that all is

fair in politics. Quite recently you must have noticed how they have been issuing mutually contradictory statements regarding their activities in connection with the formation of the Frontier ministry and how at the end they have joined the ministry, their "fundamental differences" with the Muslim League notwithstanding. Sardar Ajit Singh claims to be a representative of the minorities and a protector of their rights and says that if any injustice is done to the minorities, he will withdraw. It recalls to one's mind how exactly similar statements were used to be made by Sardar Baldev Singh on his joining the ministry. He said that all restrictions on the use of *Jhatka* would be removed, Gurmukhi and Hindi would be treated at par with Urdu and Sikhs would get their full 20 per cent share in the services. A recent case of not allowing *Jhatka* meat even in a preponderatingly Hindu Sikh district of Karnal and the supersession by a junior Mussalman of the senior-most and otherwise a most deserving Sikh candidate for the Directorship of Agriculture are alone sufficient to show that absolutely no change has come in the communal policy of the Punjab Government. May I ask Sardar Baldev Singh what he has done in protest against this grave injustice to the Sikhs and if he is incapable of doing anything, why he is clinging to his post? I believe Sardar Ajit Singh will also protect the rights of the minorities similarly.

"So far as I have been able to say I can make absolutely no distinction between Pakistan and Azad Punjab. Both are the schemes for vivisection of India and both cut at the roots of its unity and integrity. The supporters of the Azad Punjab scheme say that they have put forward this scheme to wreck the demand for Pakistan but so far as I can see they have by espousing this scheme strengthened the hands of the supporters of Pakistan. It is quite possible that by taking advantage of this scheme the British imperialists may transfer the present Ambala Division to Delhi or U. P. and thereby the percentage of the Muslims may increase from 54 per cent to 62 or 70 per cent in the Punjab and thus a Muslim 'Raj' may be established in the Punjab. It is said that the Congress and Hindu Mahasabha leaders had become ready to concede Pakistan and therefore no other alternative was left except to demand re-distribution of the Punjab so as to save as much territory as possible from being included in Pakistan. As far as it is known neither the Congress nor the Hindu Mahasabha have conceded Pakistan but, be it as it may, I want to declare from this platform once again that the Sikhs will resist Pakistan with all their might to the last man and if Master Tara Singh and his party join hands with Mr. Jinnah in this nefarious business of the vivisection of India the brave Sikhs will fight both Mr. Jinnah and Master Tara Singh.

"From a careful study of Pakistan and Azad Punjab schemes one is irresistibly driven to the conclusion that the safety of the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab lies in uniting together and becoming determined not to let Muslim communal 'raj' be established in the Punjab in any form. These schemes are no solutions of the problems of the minorities. Hindus and Sikhs have no need to despair if they are united. It is not an easy task for a majority community of just 54 per cent to 'rule over minorities constituting 46 per cent of the population if the minorities are ruled. I have so much love and respect for my Muslim brethren as for the Hindus. I am not for a war with Muslims but I am definitely for a settlement with them but the settlement must be on a basis which is equitable and honourable for both. If Muslims cannot compromise with the Hindus except on a basis of equality with them, how can they expect Sikhs to compromise with Muslims on any other basis? The method which has been adopted in the Frontier of dividing and demoralizing the minorities is one which must create distrust and hatred. It has struck the 'Panth' with resentment and I take the opportunity of declaring that Sardar Ajit Singh does not represent anybody except himself. I must also declare that the Central Akali Dal which has the support of the entire nationalist element amongst the Sikhs will always stand for independence and unity. Our slogan is 'a united and an independent India' and in this we will lead the whole of the country at any cost".

In the end Sardar Kharak Singh referred to the death of ex-Maharaja Gurcharan Singh of Nabha who died in internment and the dastardly murder of Mr. Allah Bakhsh whose death, he said, was indeed a great national loss.

Akali Conference—Resolutions—Lahore—7th. June 1943

AZAD PUNJAB SCHEME SUPPORTED & CONDEMNED

Two conferences of the Sikhs, hardly at a stone's throw from each other were held in the Minto Park on the occasion of the Jor Mela—the day of Guru

Arjun Dev's martyrdom. They passed resolutions which were contradictory to each other. The Akali Conference was presided over by *Gyani Sher Singh*. The conference passed a resolution supporting the Azad Punjab scheme of the Akali Party and the Akhand Hindustan Conference adopted a resolution condemning both the Azad Punjab Scheme as also Pakistan demand. It will be interesting to know that both these resolutions were passed unanimously without a single dissenting voice in both the conferences where enthusiasm and numbers were equal. When these resolutions were adopted at both the conferences loud shouts of "Sat Sri Akal" were raised.

The Akhand Hindustan Conference passed two other resolutions. By one of these, it called upon Sardar Baldev Singh to resign as it was of the view that no good had resulted from the Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact or as the resolution stated Unionist-Akali Pact.

The third resolution condemned the action of *S. Ajit Singh* in having joined the Muslim League Ministry in the N. W. F. Province.

The Akali conference passed three resolutions in less than three minutes.

The resolutions were read and seconded without any speeches. Besides the main Azad Punjab resolution of this conference, one condemned those Sikhs who had participated in the Lyallpur Hindu Conference. By the third resolution the conference condemned the attitude of the Hindu Press and requested the Government of India to grant permission to the Akalis to start their own daily newspaper. By an amendment which was incorporated in the resolution the Government was asked to warn the Hindu Press not to write against the Sikh leaders because it might lead to a breach of the peace.

Master *Tara Singh*, who made a comparatively moderate speech, declared that the Sikhs had a very minor quarrel with the Hindus but with the Mussalmans their quarrel was based on political grounds, for the Sikhs could not agree to Pakistan in its present shape as it would mean their slavery and the establishment of Muslim Raj for ever.

To the Hindus, Master *Tara Singh* said that in order that their quarrel might end, the Hindus should in the first instance cease to ask the Sikhs to declare that they were Hindus. Secondly, they should not maintain, as had been done, that it were the Hindus who could make Sikh leaders. Masterjee said that the Sikhs did not want to be absorbed by the Hindus, nor did he want the Sikhs to remain under the permanent slavery of the Muslims. Masterjee declared unhesitatingly that the terms of the Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact had not been honoured fully. Master *Tara Singh* seemed to have grown hopeless about the achievement of 'Swaraj' as he had lost hope of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. He therefore asserted that under such circumstances the "Khalsa Raj" would be the only alternative which, however, he said would be maintained by the support and with the goodwill of the two communities.

Central Akali Dal—Akhand Hindusthan Conference

Resolutions—Roomi—19th. and 20th. June 1943

Under the auspices of the Central Akali Dal an Akhand Hindustan Conference was held on 19th and 20th June at Roomi, a place of historical importance in Ludhiana District. *Baba Kharak Singh* presided. The President, who arrived here accompanied by *S. Labh Singh Narang* and *Bawa Sohan Singh* on the 19th, was garlanded and accorded a warm reception at Jagraon Railway Station by the prominent citizens and members of the Gurdwara Farbandhak Committee.

On the 19th and 20th a grand conference was held which was attended by thousands of Sikh people. The Chairman, Reception Committee, General *Sham Singh Roomi* and the President, *Baba Kharak Singh*, delivered their addresses. The conference strongly condemned the vivisection of the Punjab and India and warned the public against the activities of the Master group to carry out the Pakistan Scheme. Amongst the speakers were *S. Labh Singh Narang*, *Bawa Sohan Singh*, *Rais*, *Giani Puran Singh* and *S. Ajaib Singh*. The following resolutions were adopted :—

1. This conference considers the Pakistan and Azad Punjab Schemes as highly detrimental to the Panth and country and strongly condemns it. India is 'Akhand' and shall remain so.

2. As no condition of the Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact has been fulfilled, the conference demanded from *S. Baldev Singh* to resign from the Ministership.

3. The conference urges the Government of India to release political prisoners

including S. Sardul Singh Caveesher and Master Mota Singh who have been interned without any trial.

The Shromani Akali Dal

Committee Meetings—Amritsar—4th. & 5th. June 1943

AZAD PUNJAB TERRITORIES FIXED

An important meeting of the Executive of the Shromani Akali Dal was held at Amritsar on the 4th. June 1943, for three hours in its office under the presidentship of Master Tara Singh.

The meeting discussed the Azad Punjab scheme and after some discussion fixed the territories of Azad Punjab which included the divisions of Ambala, Jullundur and Lahore and the districts of Lyallpur, Montgomery and a part of Multan.

The meeting also considered the attitude of the Hindu papers towards the Akalis and decided to start a Sikh daily to counteract the propaganda of the Hindu papers. The Executive decided to suspend the District Akali Jatha, Lyallpur in view of its opposition to S. A. D. and form a new one.

On the next day, the 5th. June, the Working Committee of the Shromani Akali Dal issued the following statement about the Azad Punjab scheme:—

"The Shromani Akali Dal have received enquiries from various places about its notion of the Azad Punjab and its boundaries. In this connection, the Shromani Akali Dal hereby declares that in the Azad Punjab the boundaries shall be fixed after taking into consideration the population, property, land revenue and historical traditions of each of the communities. An independent and impartial commission alone can finally decide the demarcation of boundaries. Further, the Shromani Akali Dal is of opinion that if the new demarcations are effected on the above-mentioned principles then the Azad Punjab shall comprise of Ambala, Jullundur, Lahore Divisions and out of the Multan Division Lyallpur District some portion of Montgomery and Multan districts. The Shromani Akali Dal shall make its demand of these demarcations and shall fight for the same."

The All India Sikh Youth Conference

Annual Session—Lahore—30th. & 31st. January 1943

Presidential Address

A call to the Sikh youths to join the military in as large numbers as possible was made by Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh, M.L.A., presiding over the All-India Sikh Youth Conference held at Lahore on the 30th. January 1943.

He said that if they loved their country they should be prepared to risk their lives for the protection, integrity and honour of their homeland. The war was being fought at our gates on the eastern side. People in Calcutta and other towns in Bengal had already had a little taste of the horrors of war. Many young men had already joined the army and taken to military careers. There was no nobler profession during war and also in peace time than the profession of a soldier. Military training even though for a short time would make them physically fit and would teach them discipline. With a spirit of violence pervading the whole world India alone could not rely upon non-violence.

Discussing the political situation in the country, Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh recalled the events following Lucknow Pact of 1916 and said that out of sheer disgust and desperation, opinion was gaining ground in an important section of the Sikh community that unless the Punjab was redistributed into two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim areas were separated to form either a separate province or joined with N. W. F. P. there could be no future for the minorities in the Punjab. The propaganda in favour of Pakistan by the Muslim League, the provision in the Cripps proposals giving provinces the option to join or not to join the Indian Union and the uncertainty of the view of responsible British statesmen regarding Pakistan in spite of the authoritative and weighty opinion of H. E. the Viceroy in his Calcutta speech regarding the unity of India, had led an important

section of the Sikh community to adopt the cry of "Azad Punjab". He wished that a happier name had been selected for the slogan, but the genesis of it lay in the fact that they seemed to have lost all hope of receiving justice from the community in power in the Punjab. The originators of the cry of "Azad Punjab" did not wish to have an independent province as the name indicated outside the Union of India. They only wanted separation of the original Punjab from the western districts annexed to it by Maharaja Ranjit Singh just as Sind was separated from Bombay or Orissa from Bihar. He was personally of the view that this propaganda in favour of "Azad Punjab" should not be carried too far, lest they should be lost in the maze of internal controversy and forget the real issue of of swaraj for the whole of India. They should not rule out of the possibility of the majority community in the Punjab giving the Sikhs their rightful place.

Concluding, Sardar Bahadur Ujjal Singh emphasised that it was high time that they should all rise above party strife and communal rivalry and with united action first try to win freedom. They should have enough time to deal with one another if any party persisted in unreasonableness. He exhorted the Sikhs to act upon the high ideals of their great *gurus* and casting away petty bickerings stand together in the service of the country and community.

Before the conference commenced, *Master Tara Singh*, President of the Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and the Akali Dal, performing the flag hoisting ceremony, stressed the necessity of maintaining internal peace in these critical times.

Resolutions—2nd Day—Lahore—31st, January 1943

REFERENDUM ON "AZAD PUNJAB" MOVE

A decision to take a referendum on the question of redistribution of the boundaries of the Punjab with a view to establishing "Azad Punjab", was taken at the Conference which concluded on the next day, the 31st. January. The Conference was addressed among others by Dr. B. S. Moonje, Dr. Sir Gokulchand Narang, *Master Tarasingh* and *Giani Shersing*.

The main resolution of the Conference which was moved by *Master Tarasingh's* Party and strongly opposed by a section of the Conference representing the Rawalpindi division stated—

"In view of the fact that the working of the provincial constitution based on the communal award has proved detrimental to the interests of the Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab that they see no hope of improvement so long as the reigns of Government remain in the hands of a permanent statutory Muslim majority; that efforts are being made to make their position still worse by the movement of Pakistan; and that the Sikhs have declared their resolve not to tolerate this attack on their culture and position; this Conference expresses its opinion that the Sikh position can only be re-established by readjusting the boundaries of the Punjab by the transfer of the predominantly Muslim districts to N. W. F. P. and appeals to the Sikh youths to support this demand. This Conference urges that the Sikh and Hindu minorities in these separated districts, annexed with N. W. F. P., be granted the same weightage and safeguards as are provided for Muslim minorities in C. P. and Madras."

There was a heated discussion on the resolution for over four hours. The opponents of the resolution characterised this move as a new stunt started by the Government to break the solidarity of the Sikh community while the supporters emphasised that it was a counterblast to the Pakistan scheme. The opponents moved an amendment to the effect that a referendum be taken and if two-third Sikhs of the Punjab voted for the redistribution of boundaries then the demand should be pressed otherwise it should be dropped.

The amended resolution was passed by a majority of votes.

FORMATION OF NATIONAL GOVT. URGED

The other resolutions passed by the conference urged the formation of a National Government on the basis of coalition of all parties and communities, the immediate release of political prisoners; reservation of five per cent appointments in the Central and All-India services for Sikhs. Another resolution urged upon the Maharajas of all Sikh States, particularly those of Kapurthala and Jind, to take immediate and effective steps to restore the Sikh character of their respective States by (a) appointing Sikh Prime Minister; (b) fixing special rights for the Sikhs in the services; (c) recognising Punjabi as the official and court language in the States and making its teaching compulsory in the State schools; (d) enacting Sikh Gurdwaras Acts with a view to handing over the management of Sikh Gurdwaras to

the Sikh public of the State; (e) observing all the Sikh ceremonials and rules of conduct in their own Royal houses.

Addressing the conference, Dr. Moonjee declared that the Hindus and Sikhs would shed every ounce of their blood to oppose the Pakistan scheme which, he believed, was the creation of the British Government. The Punjab, he said, should not be afraid of Pakistan. The Punjab was the sword arm of India while Bengal, which was also affected by the Pakistan scheme, was the brain. He was sure that when both Punjab and Bengal would rise against the Pakistan scheme, it would die its own death. Concluding he appealed to the Sikhs and Hindus of the Punjab to join together to oppose Pakistan.

Master Tarasingh, in the course of a brief speech, said that there seemed to have been some misunderstanding about their demand for the redistribution of the boundaries of the Punjab. As a matter of fact he and his party were strongly in favour of the formation of a National Government, but the proposal for the "Azad Punjab" was a move to cripple the Pakistan scheme. He assured the opponents of the resolution of the "Azad Punjab" that he was prepared to accept any amendment to the scheme for the redistribution of boundaries.

The All India Nationalist League

Working Committee—New Delhi—13th. February 1943

RELEASE OF MAHATMA GANDHI URGED

The Working Committee of the All-India Nationalist League, held at New Delhi on the 13th. February 1943, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta presiding, passed a resolution expressing concern at the correspondence between the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi which culminated in the fast. The resolution expresses the fear that, in view of his age and the duration of the fast, the danger of serious results to his health and life cannot be minimised, and it should be the duty of every one to explore every method by which his life can be saved.

"While there has been an improvement in the situation," proceeds the resolution, "Mahatma Gandhi has himself reaffirmed his faith in non-violent action and repudiated the disturbances of the last six months. The Committee, therefore, earnestly suggests his unconditional release to give Mahatma Gandhi an opportunity to survey the situation *de novo* as he himself has stated in his correspondence with the Viceroy, and feels confident that as a result of his review, he will use all his undoubted influence towards checking disorder and violence which have already done so much harm to the country."

The Committee affirms its support to the Mahasabha in all legitimate steps to resist the disruption of the country and expresses gratitude to the Viceroy for his recognition of the fundamental unity of India. The committee "has noted a welcome change in Mr. Jinnah's outlook as can be seen from his recent utterances and assures him that any settlement of India's political problem consistent with India's national solidarity that he and the Muslim League might suggest will receive the most careful consideration of nationalist India." The committee notes "with particular disapproval the Government's policy in refusing the demand for a National Government by denying the representative character of each political party or group by turn, and yet not taking into their counsel at least those groups that are willing to run a National Government to-day."

The Committee expresses serious anxiety at the shortage of food and condemns the dearness allowance given to Government employees as meagre and inadequate. It urges the establishment of an evacuees commission to deal with the problems of evacuation.

Working Committee—New Delhi—21st. April 1943

PAKISTAN CONDEMNED

The Working Committee of the All-India Nationalist League, held at New Delhi on the 21st. April 1943, with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta in the chair, passed a resolution replying to Mr. Jinnah's speech at the Muslim League annual session and to the proceedings of the session. "Both", declares the resolution, "displayed a disregard

of democracy and nationalism in this country, which the Muslim League seems determined to destroy and substitute in their place a vivisected India on the basis of religious fanaticism and a political ideology of the Middle Ages wholly unsuited to the present times. The tone of the deliberations has been highly provocative and intemperate and plays into the hands of the enemies of India's freedom. Mr. Jinnah's speech in particular is a vain, ignorant and malicious diatribe on the Hindus in particular and has been rendered possible because of the pandering by the Government of the League's methods of intimidation and bullying.

"In the name of the Indian nation, this meeting declares that the country will never tolerate the proposed Pakistan which will divide the nation into two hostile camps, warring on each other for all time. The encouragement which the Government has given to the League is clearly in pursuit of its unabashed policy of divide and rule. This meeting earnestly warns its Muslim fellow-countrymen against falling into this imperialist trap and thereby leading this country into a disaster which will be ruinous alike to Hindus, Muslims and other citizens. As against this suicidal policy of Pakistan, this meeting earnestly invites the attention of Indian Muslims to the speeches and writings of the Turkish Press Delegation which recently visited this country under the leadership of Mr. Atay and commends the patriotic example of the delegation to all Muslims in India."

SOLUTION OF PRESENT DEADLOCK

The Committee declares that the only way out of the present impasse is the simultaneous withdrawal by the Congress of the resolution of August 8 last and the release of the Congress leaders by the Government. The Committee also says it is open to the Government of India and the Secretary of State even in these deplorable circumstances to prove their *bonafides* by installing in office those parties in the country who are pledged to the support of the war and who though not so vocal as the Congress and the Muslim League, constitute an overwhelming majority of the people of India.

Working Committee—New Delhi—27th. April 1943

BENGAL MINISTERIAL TANGLE

The Working Committee of the All-India Nationalist League, which met at New Delhi on the 27th. April 1943, adopted a resolution on the Bengal situation in which it asserted that the Governor had acted in utter disregard of constitutional propriety and that "his sole object in taking over the powers and passing the budget was to make it easier for the contemplated Nazimuddin Ministry to remain in office without calling a meeting of the Legislature until the next budget and enabling that Ministry in the meantime to demoralise the Legislature within the next twelve months". The resolution condemned "the utterly reactionary composition" of the new Ministry.

The Punjab Provincial Women's Conference

Annual Session—Lahore—21st. June 1943

"By refusing to their relatives interviews with the Congress prisoners and the detenus, the Government of the Punjab had set up a new record in the history of repression. It is most condemnable that even mothers put behind the bars, in the name of the Defence of India, were not permitted to see their children of tender age who had been weeping in vain to have a glimpse of their Mamas."—Thus observed *Shrimati Premvati Thapar*, Secretary, Punjab Branch of the All India Women's Conference, while speaking at a conference held under the auspices of the Punjab Branch in the Fateh Chand College, Lahore on the 21st. June 1943 on a resolution, asking that mothers at least should be allowed to interview their children of tender age.

Shrimati Rameshri Nehru presided over the conference.

Among those present at the conference were *Mrs. Ram Saran Das*, *Mrs. Anand Kumar*, *Mrs. Rai. Mrs. Buch*, *Mrs. Maharaj Krishan Kapur*, *Shrimati Premvati Thapar*, *Mrs. B. L. Rallia Ram*, *Mrs. Situ Suri*, *Mrs. Singh*, *Mrs. Nasir*, *Mrs. Bhim Sain Sachar*, *Mrs. Chatrath*, *Mrs. Sabberwal*, *Mrs. Mukand Lal Puri*, *Mrs.*

Anand, Mrs. Chopra, Mrs. Godbole and Mrs. Perin Romesh Chandra, besides members of the staff of the Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Sir Ganga Ram School and the Fateh Chand College.

MRS. RAMESHURI NEHRU'S SPEECH

In opening the conference *Shrimati Rameshuri Nehru* referred to the "upheaval in the country which had resulted in the imprisonment of Mrs. *Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit*, President of the All-India Women's Conference, of the president-elect Mrs. *Kamala Chhatopadhyaya*, *Raj Kumari Amrit Kour* and many other prominent women workers."

Those circumstances resulted in making both the provincial as also the central organisation inactive and neither could have their annual conferences.

They were now in a little better circumstance, because they were able to get together. It has, therefore, been decided to infuse new life into the provincial organisation, in which young blood had come in.

The new provincial committee of 35, which was elected to-day, among others includes *Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din*, *Khadija Minhaj*, Mrs. *Gauba*, Mrs. *Bedi*, *Begum Almas*, Mrs. *Kunti Bhandari*, *Wazir Begum*, *Baji Rashida Latif Begum*, Mrs. *Perin Romesh Chandra*, Mrs. *B. L. Rallia Ram*, Mr. *Soni*, *Sm. Rameshuri Nehru*, *Kanwarani Duleep Singh* and Mrs. *Wattal*.

Resolutions—END PRESENT DEADLOCK

Mrs. *L. C. Jain* moved the first resolution "deploring the state of political deadlock in the country" and demanding the release of *Mahatma Gandhi* and other leaders "to start negotiation with them with a view to ending the present deadlock."

The resolution expressed the view that "that was the only course of action which would lead to the achievement of the ideal of the Allied Nation." All the people and organisations were appealed to, to "pool their efforts to secure the release of *Gandhijee* and other leaders as a preliminary to the formation of a National Government."

Mrs. *Jain* reviewed the political developments in the country ever since the Cripps jugglery failed. She maintained that the whole country was at the back of the demand for the release of *Mahatma Gandhi*.

Mrs. *Perin Romesh Chander*, who seconded the resolution, urged the British Government to release the leaders without delay, as she maintained that only the jail gates stood in the way of unity and agreement among the leaders of the various parties.

Shrimati Rameshuri Nehru, while commenting on the resolution, regretted the present attitude of the British imperialists towards India.

She asserted that the responsibility of the disturbances did not lie on the shoulders of the Congress. The present deadlock was due to the attitude of the British Government and their representatives in India. She added that when history would be written it would reveal the shocking story of repression in India. She had no doubt that not only the whole of India, but every right thinking person in all parts of the world, was at the back of the demand for the release of *Gandhijee* and other Congress leaders.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

FOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

Miss *Puran Mehta* moved the second resolution "drawing the attention of the Government to the gravity of the food situation in the country, the scarcity of food and clothing and the abnormal rise in prices" which was "causing intolerable hardships particularly to the poor population of the towns."

The resolution also appealed to the "big zamindars and to the millowners of the province to do their duty in giving relief to the poor by providing them with grains and cloth at rates that are within their means." The resolution expressed concern at the closing of atta depots in Lahore and asked the Government to secure sufficient foodstuffs for the poor.

The mover criticised the "unmethodical ways of the Government" and said that it was a pity that they in the Punjab, which was the home of wheat, were crying for "atta".

Begum Almas seconded the resolution, which was passed unanimously.

RIGHT TO INTERVIEW CHILDREN

Mrs. *Acharya Ram Dev* moved the following resolution :

"This conference feels that the cancellation of the right of political prisoners to interview their relatives and friends is indefensible on any grounds whatsoever."

It is a negation of the code for the treatment of political prisoners, recognized by all civilized countries. It is particularly harsh to refuse to mothers the right to periodical interviews with their children. We request the government to revise their policy in this matter and even if they persist in refusing to recognize the general right of all political prisoners to interview their friends and relatives, at least to permit such interviews in the case of mothers having children of tender age."

Shrimati Premvati Thapar, in seconding the resolution, said that it was the height of injustice that interviews were not allowed to Congress detenus and prisoners. Even the non-official jail visitors, who were permitted to see murderers in jail, were not allowed to see the Congress detenus.

Shrimati Rameshuri Nehru, while commending the resolution to the meeting, said that no words could be strong enough to condemn the attitude of the Government sufficiently in disallowing interviews to or with the Congress prisoners. This was unknown in any civilised country.

The resolution was passed.

HINDU INTESTATE SUCCESSION BILL

Mrs. Ram Saran Das then moved the following resolution :

"This conference appeals to the Hindu public and to the members of Central Assembly to support the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill which has been referred to a Select Committee by the Central Legislature. This Bill far from being contrary to the tenets of Hindu Law is a correct exposition and interpretation of its spirit and of the real intention of its framers."

The mover of the resolution, who is the wife of the well-known Sanatanist leader *R. B. Ram Saran Das* who is the General President of the Punjab Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha, said that there was no reason why girls should not be given equal rights and a share in the patrimony.

Miss Sabherwal, seconding the resolution, maintained that the Bill was in no way against the Hindu Dharma and its scriptures.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Shrimati Rameshuri Nehru appealed to the women to send a large number of representations to the legislative department of the Central Legislature and the Select Committee supporting the Bill.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Mrs. Rai moved the following resolution :

"This conference supports the demand of the Children's Aid Society for the enactment of a Children's Act for the province. Such an Act is long overdue and the world war should not be made a pretext for the refusal of protection to thousands of unfortunate children in this province. We are of the opinion that legislation for their protection is the only way to put an end to the exploitation of children."

Mrs. Rai said that the children of to-day would be the citizens of to-morrow.

It was therefore their duty to see that the children were brought up properly and in a healthy atmosphere. It was the duty of each one of them not to look after their own children, but also to see that no child went astray and fell into undesirable hands.

Mrs. Maharaj Kishen Kapur seconded the resolution, which was passed.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

Shrimati Snehlata moved the last resolution demanding Rs. 15 as dearness allowance for every woman teacher in all schools drawing upto Rs. 150 p. m.

The mover demanded that the status of women teachers should be raised.

The resolution was passed.

Shrimati Rameshuri Nehru in her closing speech expressed the hope that the new committee would carry on the work with great enthusiasm.

PUNJAB BRANCH'S ACTIVITIES

Shrimati Premvati Thapar, secretary of the Punjab Branch, while presenting the report of the work of the Punjab Branch said that their activities were all round and of a varied nature. The Punjab Branch was doing its utmost to raise the status of women and children and preparing them to be better citizens. They were engaged in social reform work and their members were running the Lahore Women's Rescue Home, Children's Aid Society, Mangal Sabha, Istri Sahaik School, Harijan Sewak Sangh, Hospital Sewak

Sangh, Hospital Welfare Society and some of them helped the women prisoners in jails and looked after them in the mental hospital. The women, she said, had faith in the unity of the people of India and in the integrity of India herself. Hindustan was their country and they did not believe in vivisectioning it into separate parts.

The Communist Party of India Congress

1st. Congress Session—Bombay—23rd. May 1943

Mr. Dange's Opening Speech

The first Congress of the Communist Party of India was formally inaugurated on the 23rd. May 1943 at the Kamgar Maidan, Bombay, before a large number of workers and nearly three-hundred delegates to the party convention who had come from all parts of India. Placards were displayed in various languages containing slogans appealing to the people to unite to defeat the Axis powers and to grow more food and stressing the need for communal unity and demanding the release of Congress leaders.

Mr. Bankim Mukherji, President of the All-India Kisan Sabha, hoisted the communist flag. Explaining the significance of the flag, Mr. Mukherji said that apart from symbolising the solidarity of the working class it was under the Red Banner that the Russian soldiers gallantly fought and threw back the Nazi invaders. He warned the workers not to be complacent about the war but to give their best efforts for the defeat of the Axis powers.

Mr. S. A. Dange, founder member of the Communist Party of India, explaining the significance of the party Congress declared that the Communist Party which started with five members fifteen years ago had to-day over 15,000 members besides vast number of workers who follow the lead of the Communist Party. With its fundamental policy opposed to Fascism and Nazism, the Communist Party was quick to realise the grave danger to the entire working class and to freedom by the onslaught of the totalitarian powers. The Communist Party of India still remained a bulwark against Imperialism and for the purpose of crushing the Axis menace and for the attainment of independence they wanted the establishment of a national government in India. Congress-League unity, he said, was of paramount importance and the party would strain its most for the consummation of such unity. Mr. Dange added that the immediate task of the party was to carry on an agitation successfully for the release of Congress leaders from the jails.

Warning against sabotage and other internal strife, Mr. Dange said that many people doubted the wisdom of the Communist Party's stand especially after the arrests of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders on August 9. In spite of the calumny heaped on the party members, they stood resolute and warned the people not to fall prey to the provocations offered on all hands. That their advice and policy was essentially sound was borne out from the correspondence exchanged between Mahatma Gandhi and the Viceroy recently in which the former stated that acts of sabotage had not had the sanction of the Congress.

Messages of greetings from the Communist Parties of Canada, England and South Africa were read at the meeting.

DISBANDMENT OF COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Mr. P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India issued the following statement:—

The Communist Party of India fully supports the proposal of the Executive Committee of the Communist International which frees the communist parties in the different countries from the obligations arising from the statutes and decisions of the various Congress of the Communist International. This proposal is a powerful blow against all reactionary elements who are using the existence of the world communist centre in Moscow as an excuse for their machinations against the Soviet Union and to prevent the closest co-operation between the United Nations, especially between Britain, America and the U. S. S. R., at this critical and decisive moment in the war against the Fascist Axis.

The E. C. C. I. has issued a clarion call to all communist parties to concen-

trate all their effort to unite the working class and the people in their respective countries for the supreme task of striking together against fascist imperialists in the final battles which are due to open now after the clearing of North Africa, burning patriotism, self-sacrificing effort for the mobilisation of the people for the holy war of liberation of the peoples from the menace of fascism—this is the acid test of international communism to-day.

By knocking the bottom of the prejudices against the Comintern the proposal will make the broadest national unity possible in such country and pave the way for the closed joint action between the members of the United Nations in dealing the final death blow against fascist imperialism for the freedom of all the people of the world and lay the basis for the victory of world socialism on a vaster plane than ever before.

Party Convention—Bombay—26th. May 1943

Mr. P. C. Joshi's Address

Exhorting the delegates to intensify their efforts on the food and production fronts and to wean away people from committing acts of sabotage and hindering war efforts, Mr. P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, in an address to the Party Convention at Bombay on the 26th. May 1943 emphasised that only if they made all those campaigns go with a bang would they be able to do anything practical to solve the national crisis. "Everything else is empty phrases", he said, adding, "there is no other short-cut to National Government, no other way out of the ditch in which our country is."

The Party Convention proper began this morning in the auditorium of the R. M. Bhatt School, Parel. The hall was tastefully decorated with Red flags and portraits of prominent Communists throughout the world were hung on the walls. On either side of the dais were hung two big portraits of *Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru* and Mr. M. A. Jinnah against the background of the Congress and Muslim League flags respectively.

As the present Party Congress is the first of its kind since the Communists as a party started their activities in India, Mr. Joshi gave an elaborate review of how the party gradually grew up in strength and came to occupy its present position. "We have grown from a tiny group ten years ago to a major political organisation that can stand its own ground among the Indian people on the basis of its own political policy, on the strength of what appeal it makes to our patriotic people. In the dark horizon that is India to-day, the existence and growth of our party is the silver-lining. We have grown as no other party has grown in the past. From a hunted underground organisation, we have become a major political party."

Discussing the war, Mr. Joshi said, "The dilemma of the Congress patriot is, 'How can it be a people's war for us when the British are sitting on top of us?' From where did it arise? They fiddled with two abstract categories imperialism and Fascism. They did not see world imperialism as one system which is finally cracking up right under our eyes. They saw our people apart from the peoples of the world." Mr. Joshi asserted that if they regarded it as the war of British Imperialists, they would pass helpless from British imperialists to Japanese fascists. The path to freedom, he said, lay through successful defence of India, which demanded the uniting of her people in an alliance with the peoples of the world to fight this war as the patriotic war for all.

CRIPPS MISSION

Referring to the Cripps' Mission, Mr. Joshi said that the Congress stand was, "Give us National Government and we will defend the country." The League said: "Give us self-determination and we will help you to defend the country with or without the Congress." "Imperialist reactionaries had won and called off the negotiations", said Mr. Joshi. "They used the promise of future freedom to calm the peoples of the United Nations. They used the Indian disunity to deny power to the League or the Congress. Neither the Congress nor the League took the initiative to forge a united front to face Sir Stafford Cripps, blow up the imperialist game and jointly rouse the people for national defence. Both looked to the imperialist government for power. Neither trusted the other and both lost."

Reviewing the events that led up to the passing of the August resolution by the Congress and the subsequent happenings, Mr. Joshi said that by the August resolution the Congress, for the first time, declared in clear and unambiguous terms that the world stood divided into two camps and India's place was with the United Nations. The Congress declared its willingness to participate in the war on the

basis of a National Government and had asked for a settlement but unfortunately neither *Mahatma Gandhi* nor *Pandit Nehru* took a step towards national unity which alone could isolate imperialist reaction and be the basis of unity with the United Nations. Thus the advance in policy—declaration of willingness to defend India in alliance with the United Nations—was negated by the threat of blowing up the defence of India in case the British imperialists did not agree to hand over power. "What was the basis of this apparent contradiction?" asked Mr. Joshi. "How do they evolve a practical slogan that negates their own desired policy? Because they do not regard national defence as a paramount duty. Because they think defending India, as it is, is defending their slavery."

Condemning the Government's action in arresting Congress leaders, Mr. Joshi said that the Government's action threw many patriots into the arms of the "fifth column" and destroyed the people's morale. Forces were let loose out of which only the Japanese invader could gain.

GANDHIJI'S STAND

Dealing with events leading up to Mahatma Gandhi's fast, Mr. Joshi said that Mahatma Gandhi's letters to the Viceroy had great political significance. Their positive content was repudiation of sabotage and anarchy, willingness for settlement and anxiety over the food crisis. It told Congressmen that sabotage was not Congress policy and his letters became a powerful lever in the hands of the Communists to wean away honest Congressmen from the "fifth column." The general outlook of a patriot to-day, Mr. Joshi added, was that he sat at home or in jail demoralised. But as long as they held this outlook, they would once again fall victim to the "fifth column" at any stage, through the food end or with invasion.

Japan, he said, had entered the war for the domination of Asia. India was the biggest and easiest prize for her. She must either get India or see India being used as a base to wipe her out. The worse the situation for the Axis in the west, the more desperate the Japanese must become in the East and strike hardest at the weakest spot.

After referring to the campaigns carried on by the Communist Party for the release of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders, Mr. Joshi stressed the importance of bringing about Congress-League unity. "Hunger had done it better than anything else. Formulation of demands was not enough because they were patent. What was needed was a positive and widest building of unity to intervene in the immediate situation. To abuse the bureaucrat to place the patriot is to go the way the patriot himself went and out of which it is our task to rescue him. Verbal exposure of the bureaucracy is Satyagraha and not Bolshevism. It is to parade our helplessness before the bureaucracy and inability to win the people in support of party policy."

Referring to the campaign for the release of the Congress leaders, Mr. Joshi said that keeping up an agitation as a general anti-repression campaign would be playing into the hands of the bureaucracy and not really working to get the leaders out. To get Mahatma Gandhi out they should appeal to all to stop sabotage and explain that every bomb thrown was a bomb thrown at the leaders.

INDIA'S DEFENCE

Discussing the role of the Indian army, Mr. Joshi said that it was important to popularise vigorously the role of all Allied armies and above all the Indian army. The turn in the war meant a change in the role of the British and Indian armies. They must be popularised as armies of Indian defence and not looked upon or treated as armies of occupation. It did not matter what the motive of the British rulers was in defending India. What would happen to post-war India depended upon whether the existing soldiers could hold the front now or not and what the Indian patriots did on the home front.

Concluding, Mr. Joshi said: "It is a grave and menacing situation. Every step that we take towards national unity is one step towards solving the national crisis. Every blow that we strike against the "fifth column" is a blow struck with the Red Army and every inch that we make the British bureaucrats move brings the day of our free and equal alliance with the British people nearer. Only if we act to solve the crisis within our country will others be able to help us. The more we hold up the rear, the more we unite the rear with the front, the sooner will be dispelled the lies spread by the imperialist propagandists about the Congress and the situation in India and their own worth as the defenders of India

and the organisers of our war-effort. India's defence is primarily the responsibility of Indian patriots. It is also that of the United Nations. The more we discharge our own duty to our Motherland, the easier we get the aid of the rest of the freedom-loving peoples and humanity to fight for our freedom and the world's freedom."

RESOLUTIONS—TRIBUTES TO MARTYRS

A resolution paying tributes to the sacrifices made in the cause of Communists by the Indian Communists was next passed. Mr. *Sohan Singh Bakhna*, 82-years old delegate from the Punjab and founder of the Ghadr Party, moved the resolution.

Resolutions—Bombay—31st. May 1943

FORMATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

"India's fate and freedom is indissolubly linked with the fight for world freedom. This is no longer a fine phrase but a grim reality which emerges ever more clearly out of the gruelling experiences of our own people during the last 18 months as well as from the happenings during the last two years of the war of liberation now being fought in five continents," says a lengthy resolution adopted at the first Congress of the Communist Party to-day.

The resolution gives an elaborate review of the war situation, the Indian political deadlock and outlines new slogans for the future conduct of the Communist Party. The resolution emphasises the need for building up Trade Unions, Kisan Sabhas, students' and women's organisations for the prosecution of campaigns for growing more food, acceleration of production, national unity and getting the release of Congress prisoners.

The resolution calls upon all the Communists in the country to carry on a vigorous campaign to bring about national unity for national defence and for the establishment of a National Government. It exhorts the Communists to work against sabotage and "Fifth Column" activities and to join the Civil Defence services in the country. Party members are particularly asked to carry on a campaign to popularise the role of the Indian and Allied armies as defenders of India. "In the threatened areas," the resolution says, "Communists must offer organised co-operation of the people through their mass organisation, and party units, to the British or Indian troops for offensive as well as defensive preparation."

In regard to the campaign for the release of imprisoned leaders, the resolution says: "The key slogan which we place in the forefront before all is "End the deadlock." We want the release of national leaders for making a settlement possible for their participation in the National Government for national defence. In uniting Congressmen for the release campaign, we must rally them against "Fifth Column" and for accepting the right of self-determination for Muslim and other nationalities. In winning the support of the League patriots to this campaign, we must explain how the release of Congress leaders and Congress-League unity alone is the way of winning self-determination and no other."

On the food situation, the resolution urges the Party members to carry on active propaganda for the prevention of food riots and against hoarding. It recommends the formation of "food committees" composed of all sections and parties in it, prevention of rioting and exposure of hoarders, securing of a fair prices to the Kisan, public control of all stocks, smooth working of rationing in towns and regular supply of stocks to honest traders and food committees in rural areas."

In an appeal to the working class to produce more for the defence of the Motherland, the resolution says: "It is the patriotic duty of the worker to strengthen defence by taking the initiative for organising more production and better transport, and against stoppage of work irrespective of what the boss or the bureaucrat does. Communists should take a bold and open stand against strikes, as they injure the defence of the country by holding up production."

Emphasis is also laid on the need for consolidating the advances made by the Party hitherto and for further expansion of the Party on firm and sound lines.

The resolution pays a tribute to the Red Army's achievements and adds: "Our people must unite to defend the Motherland shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of the United Nations. That alone leads to freedom. Refusal to see this leads to the disastrous illusion of freedom through Hitler or the Japs. It leads straight to the other camp and to Fascist enslavement."

RIGHT OF SECESSION FOR NATIONALITIES

Laying down the main principles of the Communist policy on the Pakistan issue, the following resolution was adopted by the Party:—

To build the United National Front of the peoples of the various communities and Nationalities that inhabit India, for the defence and freedom of our country, it is necessary to dispel the mutual distrust and suspicion that exists among them. This is a remnant of memories of past historical oppression and of present social inequalities arising out of the feudal imperialist exploitation. For this purpose, the basic rights of the communities and nationalities must be made an essential part of the programme of the United National Front.

The programme of the U. N. F. must declare that in free India, there will be perfect equality between nationalities and communities that live together in India. There will be no oppression of one nationality by another. There will be no inequalities or disabilities based on caste or community. To ensure this, the national movement must recognise the following rights as part of its programme for national unity.

(A) Every section of the Indian people which has a contiguous territory as its homeland, common historical tradition, common language, culture, psychological make-up and common economic life would be recognised as a distinct nationality, with the right to exist as an autonomous State within the free Indian Union or Federation and will have the right to secede from it if it may so desire. This means that the territories which are homelands of such nationalities and which to-day are split up by the artificial boundaries of the present British provinces and of the so-called "Indian States", would be re-united and restored to them in free India. Thus the free India of to-morrow would be a federation or union of autonomous States of the various nationalities, such as, the Pathans, Western Punjabis (dominantly Muslims), Sikhs, Sindhis, Hindusthanis, Rajasthanis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Assamese, Beharis, Oriyas, Andhras, Tamils, Maharashtrians, the people of Kerala, etc.

(B) If there are interspersed minorities in the new States, thus formed, their rights regarding their culture, language, education, etc., would be guaranteed by statute and their infringement would be punishable by law.

(C) All disabilities, privileges and discriminations based on caste, race, or community (such as untouchability and allied wrongs) would be abolished by statute and their infringement would be punishable by law.

Such a declaration of rights inasmuch as it concedes to every nationality as defined above, and therefore, to nationalities having the Muslim faith, the right of autonomous state existence and of secession, can form the basis for unity between the National Congress and the League. For, this would give to the Muslims, wherever they are in an overwhelming majority in a contiguous territory, which is their homeland, the right to form their autonomous States and even to separate if they so desire. In the case of Muslims of the Eastern and Northern districts of Bengal where they form an overwhelming majority, they may form themselves into an autonomous region, or may form a separate State. Such a declaration, therefore, concedes the just essence of the Pakistan demand and has nothing in common with the separatist theory of dividing India into two nations on the basis of religions.

But the recognition of the right of separation in this form need not, necessarily, lead to actual separation. On the other hand, by dispelling the mutual suspicions, it brings about unity of action to-day and lays the basis for a greater unity in the free India of to-morrow. National unity, forged on the basis of such a declaration and strengthened in the course of joint struggle in the defence of our Motherland, is bound to convince the peoples of all Indian nationalities of the urgent need to stick together and to form a free Indian Union or Federation in which each national State would be a free and equal member with the right to secede. They will thus see this as the only path of protecting the freedom and democracy achieved and building, on that secure basis, a greater and greater unity of India than our country has ever seen.

In spite of the apparent conflict and seemingly insoluble difficulties, the burning desire for unity is taking a firmer hold of the people who to-day follow the Congress or the League. Under the stress of the growing menace of Fascist invasion and of the present national crisis, the leadership of two organisations also have moved closer together and in the direction of the very solution given in this resolution. There is no room, whatsoever, for defeatism on the question of unity. The Communist Party calls upon all patriots to join hands with it in popularising the principles laid down herein, and thus speed up the realisation Congress-League

unity, which is to-day the only path of national salvation for our Motherland in the hour of her gravest peril.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

The Congress concluded its session late at night. Mr. P. C. Joshi was declared elected General Secretary of the Party and the following were elected members of the Central Committee :

Messrs. G. Adhikari, B. T. Ranadive, A. K. Ghose, S. V. Ghate, R. D. Bharadwaj, S. G. Sardesai, S. A. Dange, N. C. Krishnan, P. Sundarayya, E. M. S. Namboodridad, Somnath Lahiri, D. S. Vaidya, Biswanath Mukherji, Sajjad Zaheer, Ranen Sen, Bhowani Sen, Iqbal Singh, S. S. Batliwala, Arun Bose, Manzer Rizvi, and Mohan Kumaramangalam.

The All India Christian Conference

25th. Session—New Delhi—19th. and 20th. March 1943

Presidential Address

"I feel even at this late stage that a small conference of Hindu, Muslim, Indian Christian, Sikh and Parsi leaders should be convened to deal with the present political situation, for there cannot be peace in India or full co-operation in the war effort while thousands of our fellow countrymen are in detention and sabotage continues," said *Raja Sir Maharaj Singh*, delivering his presidential address at the 25th session of the All-India Conference of Indian Christians, which commenced at New Delhi on the 19th. March 1943.

He added : "Merely to fold one's hands and tell the various political parties to come to an agreement is not consonant either with the duty or the dignity of the Government in power in India or elsewhere. But we, Indians, cannot blame only the Government for the unhappy plight in which India is placed. We also must share the responsibility and try to secure Hindu-Muslim unity, for without some agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League, there would be no lasting solution of the problem of India."

TRIBUTE TO NON-PARTY LEADERS

Sir Maharaj Singh paid a tribute to Sir *Tej Bahadur Sapru* and Mr. C. *Rajagopalachari* "for doing their utmost to bring about a better feeling between the Government and non-official Indians on the one side and Hindus and Muslims on the other," and said that the various non-party political conferences had done much good in spite of apparent failure, and he hoped that they would be continued.

Sir Maharaj Singh asserted that his community was not behind any other in its burning desire for a self-governing India in the immediate future, and while they were Christians and proud to be such so far as faith was concerned, in all other matters, they were Indians first and Indians last. He maintained that the minorities question was a world problem and would necessarily be one of the crucial difficulties crying for solution at the next Peace Conference. While the Indian Christians were bound to sympathise with Muslims, who formed the second largest religious community in India, in their desire for the fullest protection of minority rights, he was of the view that no final decision could or should reasonably be expected at present on questions like Pakistan. He appealed to Hindus and Muslims to postpone any final arrangement or decision on one side or the other till peace had been restored. He considered talks of "fighting" for or against Pakistan highly injurious. Indeed, they were suicidal, for the only fighting that one could visualise was communal rioting on a large scale and intensified ill-feeling.

Referring to *Mahatma Gandhi's* fast, *Sir Maharaj Singh* expressed his belief that the *Mahatma's* unconditional release would have been in the interests of the Government, for as a free man "he would no doubt have condemned sabotage and other acts of violence and might also have seen his way to a re-examination of the Indian political situation."

CLAIMS OF INDIAN CHRISTIANS

He complained that as the largest group among the small minorities, the claims of Indian Christians in the past for a fair share of appointments had not met with

adequate consideration. He said: "There is a strong feeling among us that the Executive Council of the Governor-General, which at present is a composite body representing different creeds, groups and interests, should contain an Indian Christian representative."

Concluding, he said: "Our community has not only increased in numbers but firmly believe that we have risen in the estimation of our fellow countrymen. We are now a recognised section of the population of India and will be increasingly so in the future. Difficulties and disappointments will, without doubt, lie in our path. Against one difficulty, I must particularly warn you and that is unnecessary disunion and internal dissensions, but with confidence in ourselves and with trust in Providence, our progress is assured."

Sir Frederick James, M. L. A. (Central), in a brief greeting address to the Conference, hoped that the Conference would do its best to perform the task of peace-makers for which it was peculiarly fitted.

Pandit H. N. Kunzru, Member, Council of State, who also addressed the Conference, said it was heartening to find the Indian Christian community striving for unity, when threats of divisions were overwhelming the country, and to think that Indian Christians were ready to place their country above communal considerations. He was glad they had taken their part in the national movement for securing a self-governing and self-reliant India.

In his address, *R. B. S. L. Ralliam*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, offered felicitations to *Sir Maharaj Singh* on his appointment as the Prime Minister of Kashmir. The outgoing President, *Mr. Ram Chandra Roy*, related his efforts to bring about unity among Hindus and Muslims and said although the results were not so encouraging, he was convinced that perseverance and persistence in this matter would ultimately bear fruit.

Resolutions—2nd Day—New Delhi—20th. March 1943

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE SUGGESTED

The demand that a round table conference should be convened immediately in India to reach an agreed solution of important constitutional problems was put forward by the Conference to-day, when a number of resolutions on the political situation in the country were passed.

The Conference called upon the British Government to make a clear declaration as soon as possible that India would attain full freedom within two years after the cessation of hostilities. Meanwhile, it appealed to the leaders of the principal parties and communities in India to come to an agreed solution on the communal problem, failing which the question might be referred for decision to an international tribunal.

RELEASE OF GANDESHI URGED

The Conference congratulated Mahatma Gandhi on the successful termination of his fast. In the hope and belief that he would condemn violence and use his influence against it and would assist in solving the present political impasse, the Conference expressed the opinion that the Government should release Mahatma Gandhi unconditionally without further delay.

A resolution deploring and condemning acts of violence and excesses committed in repressing violence was also passed.

The Conference, by another resolution, reaffirmed its adherence to the cause of the Allied Nations against the Axis Powers. In order to enlist the full co-operation of the people of India in the war efforts, it demanded the immediate formation of composite governments at the Centre and in the Provinces consisting of non-officials only with the sole exception of the Commander-in-Chief and urged that such composite governments should include representatives of Indian Christians. The community regarded with deep concern the non-inclusion of an Indian Christian in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Giving unqualified support to the ideal of a free and independent India in a world brotherhood of nations, the Conference considered that after the war all empire ideologies should be eliminated as a menace to the future of world peace.

The Conference pledged support to all efforts made by the Non-Party Leaders' Conference to find a way out of the present impasse and directed its office to ensure that Indian Christians were adequately represented on all such gatherings.

Condolence resolution on the death of *Dr. D. X. De Souza*, and *Dr. S. K. Datta* were also passed.

The Conference reaffirmed its previous resolutions on Mission and Church

properties in India and gave expression to its deep concern over the policy of some Missions regarding the sale of properties.

A Committee, consisting of seven members, was appointed to consider the new draft marriage bill for Christian marriages in India and report the same to the Executive Committee.

The Conference elected the Executive as well as the Council of the All India Conference of Indian Christians for the next year and fixed the next venue of the session at Hyderabad (Deccan) failing which it was decided that the Conference should be arranged to be held in Bombay.

The All India Harijan Conference

Ninth Session—Amritsar—11th. and 12th. April 1943

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Advice to the depressed classes not to isolate themselves from the Hindus but co-operate with them for their social, religious and political uplift was given by Mr. H. J. Khandekar in his presidential address to the ninth All-India Harijan Conference held at Amritsar on the 11th. April 1943.

Referring to the Pakistan demand, he pointed out that the Muslims were the sons of the soil and as such were entitled to their due, but they should give up the idea of Pakistan, which was nothing but an obstacle in the way of Swaraj. Dealing with the condition of the depressed classes, Mr. Khandekar said: "The Hindus and their leaders talk much about the uplift and betterment of the depressed classes, but they do very little. Untouchability is an awful ghost and a dark spot on Hindu society; it has ruined and does not allow us to prosper in any way". He added that the result of this religious and social boycott by the caste Hindus was that lakhs of members of the depressed classes embraced other religions.

The President made a strong plea for adequate representation of the depressed classes in the services, the local bodies and the Legislature and criticised the Punjab Land Alienation Act which debarred them from becoming landlords.

RESOLUTIONS

A resolution mourning the death of Mr. Mahadev Desai, Begum Azad and Pt. Ramakant Malaviya was moved from the chair and was passed all standing.

Mr. Prithvi Singh Azad, General Secretary of the All-India Depressed Classes League Conference, moved a resolution which expressed regret that despite the repeated and united demand of the Indian people for the independence of the country, India had not been made free. The resolution described as absolutely baseless the Government statement that the depressed classes were opposed to the demand for the independence of the country and asked for immediate complete independence of India. The resolution was seconded by Mr. Yamna Rai of Bihar.

The resolution, demanding the release of Mahatma Gandhi and other National leaders for the solution of the Indian deadlock and the establishment of an all-parties Government at the centre with due representation to the depressed classes was moved by Mr. G. L. Agnihotry of Bombay, who, in a short speech, criticised the policy of drift followed by the Government. Mr. Matte of C. P. seconded the resolution.

Moving a resolution on the unity of India, Mr. Chet Ram, M.L.A., of Allahabad, condemned the Pakistan, the Azad Punjab and other separatist schemes aiming at the vivisection of the country. The resolution was seconded by B. Dular Chand Ram of Bengal.

Principal Ramdas moved a resolution, which said that they were a part and parcel of the Hindu community and demanded equal rights for the Harijans from the Hindus and appealed to the Government that the Harijans should be in Government services in proportion to their population. Mr. Satya Paul seconded the resolution.

Another resolution urged the State rulers to co-opt the representatives of the Harijans on the State Assemblies or Advisory Councils and give land for cultivation to the depressed classes.

Resolutions—2nd. Day—Amritsar—12th. April 1943

The Conference concluded its deliberations to-day. Half a dozen more resolutions were passed.

The first resolution condemned the Government of India Act 1935 for having given weightage to the Muslims at the expense of the Depressed Classes and demanded of the Government to give them their share in proportion to their population failing which the Depressed Classes would oppose any future constitution of India.

The second resolution urged the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha to give the Depressed Classes equal status and recognise their social, political and religious rights and demanded of the Government to end untouchability through an Act.

Other resolutions called upon the Depressed Classes to seek the help of the Hindus in matters of their welfare, demanded of the Government the recognition of the rights of the criminal tribes, appealed to the local bodies to increase the emoluments of the sweepers and lastly urged the Government to arrange for the education of the Depressed Classes, open industrial schools for them and award them stipends.

Mr. R. B. Matte of Bihar, Mr. Agnibhoj of Bombay, Mr. Yamnalal of Bihar, Mr. Dular Chand Ram of Bengal, Mr. Satgopal Bikhshu of Delhi and Mr. Chet Ram M.L.A. of Allahabad spoke on the resolutions.

Mr. Prithvi Singh Azad presented the annual report and thanked the delegates. The Conference decided to hold the next session in Bihar.

At the annual elections held last night Mr. Jagjiwan Ram, M.L.A. was elected President and Mr. H. J. Khandekar was appointed Working President. A Working Committee of 21 was formed.

The All India Kisan Conference

Resolutions—Bhakna—4th. April 1943

POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

The All-India Kisan Conference was held at Bhakna in the Punjab on the 4th. April 1943. Mr. Bankim Mukherjee, M.L.A. (Bengal), presided. The gathering at the conference thinned down to-day as a large number of the visitors went away to Tarn Taran and Amritsar for the 'holy dip' on the "Amavas Day". The proceedings were preceded by a Kavi Darbar with Mr. Feroz Din Mansoor in the chair.

Among those who sat on the 'dais' was Lady Shafi. There were seated around the presidential chair about 40 delegates who had come from other provinces.

The proceedings which were conducted in Punjabi, Hindustani and English were marked by enthusiasm, which was exhibited in abundance, for the "Reds" and the Chinese comrades who were fighting their battles. Repeated slogans of "Red Army Zindabad" and "Chinese Comrades Zindabad" were raised as speaker after speaker referred to what each one of them described as the "most heroic deeds" of Reds or the Chinese.

The one common theme of all the speakers was that the communists had saved the people, any way of the Punjab, from going astray after August 9 last. Great stress was laid by almost every speaker on the most dire necessity of preparing the country to fight the "Japanese brutes", "Fascism" and "Hitlerism." The suggested remedy for India's ills at present was also common to all speakers; they demanded the release of *Gandhiji* and other leaders and the establishment of a National Government. Stress was also laid on the need of Congress-League unity.

The resolutions adopted at the conference were of unusual length and the main resolution on the political situation and a few others covered a number of foolscap single space closely typed pages.

The main resolution on the political situation in the country, fastened the responsibility for precipitating the crisis and imperilling the defence and the freedom of the country on the head of the Imperialist bureaucracy. Continuing, the resolution said that the Government measures only worsened the situation. "The bureaucracy can be fought only by the unity of the Hindu and Muslim masses,

through which alone Congress-League unity can be achieved and a National Government for National defence formed," added the resolution.

Referring to the Gandhi-Linlithgow correspondence, the resolution stated that *Gandhiji* took a clear initiative for settlement and for the solution of the crisis but the British Government spurned this offer for an honourable settlement and showed to what lengths it was prepared to go in its desperate determination to cling to power. In the end the resolution warned the Government to turn away from the "disastrous and impossible attempt to crush the Congress and the Indian people." It warned the British Government that the attitude of Mr. Amery and Major Attlee demanding abject humiliation from Congress leaders could only lead to untold sufferings to people and jeopardise the cause of freedom and victory over Fascism. The Viceroy's refusal to negotiate with non-party leaders for a settlement of the Indian deadlock was condemned. The resolution demanded the release of *Gandhiji* and other Congress leaders so that unity could be achieved between the Congress and the Muslim League and the entire nation rallied for realising a National Government. The resolution set before the kisans the task of "uniting in winning *Gandhiji's* release, joining hands to stop sabotage and smash the fifth column, uniting to solve the food crisis and organising a unity campaign in the rural areas to promote unity between the Hindu and the Muslim masses."

A fervent appeal to the Trade Unions and the Muslim masses and the League patriots to join the movement was made.

By the first resolution the conference conveyed "Red Salute" and greetings to the Army and expressed its most sincere appreciation of the heroic deeds of the Russian Army.

Swami Sahjanand, moving the resolution, said that the Red Army had saved not only Stalingrad, but the whole of the world. The world was proud of the heroic deeds of the Reds and even their worst critics in England and America were their most vocal admirers. The world to-day had realised that its salvation lay in clasping the hand of the Red Army and clinging fast to the Soviet friendship. The *Swami* felt certain that Russia, China and other Allied countries were bound to win. But what gladdened the *Swami's* heart most was that not only had the Red Army won and saved India and the world, but as the result of its victories the supremacy of communism had been established and the Soviet ideal had succeeded. Proceeding the *Swami* demanded the launching of the Second Front without any further delay to crush Hitlerism. He pleaded that in India also they must forge a united demand before they would ever be able to compel Mr. Churchill, Mr. Amery or Lord Linlithgow to change their attitude. He asked them to remember how Mr. Churchill changed his attitude towards Russia. Mere memorandums would be of no avail.

S. Acchar Singh Chhima, while seconding the resolution, said : "Not only would Russia win, but Hitler will be slain." The victory of the Red Army would mean the death-knell of Imperialism, and the establishment of Mazdoor and Kisan Raj all the world over, including India. But that was possible only if they would stop the Japanese aggression and defend their own country.

The resolution was adopted amidst shouts of "Red Army Zindabad."

GREETINGS TO CHINESE

Mr. *Bhagat Singh Bilga* moved the second resolution, conveying greetings to the Chinese armies to whom he paid high tributes for their acts of heroism and said that it was because of the brave Chinese that Japan's designs failed. He felt that Japan's grave would be dug in China.

Mr. *Deshpande* (C. P.) seconded the resolution and said that they wanted to assure China of India's friendship. He wanted the establishment of a National Government in India which would enable them to render effective help to China.

Mr. *Keral* (Andhra) moved a resolution regarding 4 'Kayyur Comrades' who were sentenced to death. The mover conveyed a message of the 4 condemned Kisan workers. *S. Deleep Singh* seconded the resolution which was passed.

POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA

Sardar Teja Singh Swatantra, moving the main resolution on the political situation, said that the credit for saving India from external aggression and internal disturbances and riots, which would have resulted in an unknown upheaval, went to the workers and Kisans who gave the right lead and remained calm and composed. He repeated his story of a prisoner (India) in chains with a policeman (British ruler) both faced with a leopard (Japan) and said that India should not

out of disgust, because Britain would not free her, try to throw herself into the clutches of Japan. Sabotage, he said, was like smashing the means of saving their country while the Kisans and Mazdoors were busy organising to help China and Russia and to ward off danger of Japanese aggression. He appealed for unity among all communities in order to put an end to the activities of the fifth columnists.

Mr. Bokhari (Sind), seconding the resolution, said that though the Kisans and Communists were called "British," it had been amply proved that their policy of preparing the country against Japanese aggression and of preaching against sabotage, preaching unity between the Congress and the League and demanding release of *Gandhiji* and other leaders was the right policy. They stood fast to that policy and their demands.

Mr. Prolekar (Maharashtra) who moved the resolution on the food situation, said that the Kisans and the Mazdoors in other parts of the country were not getting food and other necessities of life. Citing his own example he said, that it was after 9 months that he had seen a wheat chapati and eaten it on coming to the Punjab. He held the Government responsible for the present state of affairs.

Mr. Karam Singh Mann seconding the resolution referred to the food situation in other parts of India and the Punjab which was the home of wheat. This situation was due not to any lesser growth of food—which had increased—or hoarding by Kisans but was due to hoarding by the capitalists who were doing so for profiteering. The need for easing the food situation had been felt by Mahatma *Gandhi*. The Punjab Kisans were willing to solve that problem. The difficulty was that the "Unionist Lords" who possessed over 200 million maunds of wheat did not want that wheat to be exported from the Punjab so that they might earn the highest profits. The resolution was passed.

S. Jagjit Singh moved a resolution regarding "grow-more-food." He said it was a pity that in an agricultural country like India they were feeling the paucity of food. The Kisans could certainly help to ease the situation by growing more food. Mr. Prasad Rao (Andhra) seconded the resolution which was passed.

ARMY OF WORKERS

Swami Sahjanand moved a resolution regarding the organisation of Kisan Sabha. He said the time had come when they must have whole time and even paid workers and a complete and well-organised organisation. One-anna membership of 12 lakh Kisans would give to the All-India Kisan Sabha at the rate of one pie per member as its share about Rs. 12,000 by which they could employ about 50 graduates to do research and organisation work for them. The present day politics and Government were influenced not by mere slogans, but by organisation and preparations of files and for that purpose they required an army of workers.

Comrade Abdulla Rasul, seconding the resolution said that they should make the Kisan Sabha their own. The resolution was passed. A resolution moved from the chair demanded the release of S. Jagjit Singh and S. Bhagat Singh who were lying ill in jail.

Sardar Sohan Singh Josh, M. L. A. moved a resolution, condemning the "policy of repression" in India and particularly in the Punjab and in Kerala where the Kisan Sabha was still banned. The resolution specially referred to the continued ban on the holding of meetings, restrictions on the press, internments and detentions of Kisan workers, lathi charge and imposition of collective fines, etc. The mover mentioned several instances of alleged police excesses in Ohuhr Chak and Jagraon. It was, he said, essential to put an end to those "excesses" in order to prevent the people turning fifth columnists. He added: "We are proud and we can raise our head with pride that the Punjab did not go on the wrong and foolish path which misguided people had tried to carve for them during the last some months. The result was that we were saved from ruination and air bombardments." He said that he was willing to stand a surety for Dr. Gopi Chand, Lala Bhim Sain Sachar and other leaders that if they were released they would oppose sabotage. He asked why these communist friends in detention were not being released. Mr. Sharma (Bihar) seconded the resolution which was passed.

A resolution was moved by Mr. Jamna Karjee (Bihar) regarding the tenancy laws. It asked the tenants to mobilise, to take advantage of the existing laws and asked the Government to pass new laws and amend the present laws so as to give adequate relief and protection to the tenants.

Mr. Harsh Dev Malaviya seconded the resolution which was passed.

Some resolutions regarding the co-operative movement difficulties of Kisans in the Indian States, export of agricultural produce and cotton, etc., and asking

the fixing of minimum price of sugar cane and cotton in relation to the price of sugar and cloth were moved from the chair and passed.

In his concluding remarks Mr. *Bankim Mukherjee* said that it was a matter of satisfaction that they had discussed matters concerning all provinces. This was bound to give them a wider outlook. He wanted to see the Soviet system of life in action in India which would revolutionise that viewpoint. By meeting together however they could understand and know each other. He hoped that the organisational work, if completed, would give their Sabha strength. They had discussed political matters most at the conference and that was due to the present war conditions. The only remedy was the establishment of a National Government. The political organisations in the country having become helpless, it was for the Kisan Sabha to do the job because it was the only long sighted organisation with a broad outlook. What the Kisan Sabha was doing to-day would be adopted by other organisations to-morrow as the only right policy he said, and added that they would have the satisfaction of having given the proper lead in difficult times.

Mr. *Mookerjee* concluded: "I can tell you that before the present year passes out we would liberate India from her long and old chains and we would have a National Government established in India".

The All India Ahrar Committee

Central Committee—Saharanpur—26th. April 1943.

STATEMENT OF POLICY ABOUT INDIAN SITUATION

The All India Ahrar Committee has given its best consideration to the Akhand Bharat, Pakistan, Azad Punjab and other schemes, and has in the meantime paid attention to the havoc wrought by the world war as well as to the difficult and dangerous conditions created in areas even far away from the war zones.

In spite of all careful deliberations, this committee does not find itself inclined to change its previous conviction that the complicated problem of Indian politics can be solved only through peace and mutual confidence between the people inhabiting this country. Therefore this committee wishes to request all protagonists of these various schemes that no scheme of the nature of Akhand Bharat, Pakistan or Azad Punjab can succeed except through mutual confidence; and if any party believes that it can get any such scheme established with the British aid, it should not ignore the fact that any scheme set up under the auspices of the British bomber will compel us to live under British enslavement, and will work only so long as the chains of British slavery subsist.

Samples of such Akhand Bharats, Pakistans and Azad Punjab, have already existed in various Indian States ever since the inception of British rule. Hence it is the duty of Indian politicians to see that in their hot headed advances they may not ultimately produce only a few more helpless and beleaguered States in the country. Under the circumstances this committee wishes to place on record its policy in the following words:

1. Majlise Ahrare Islam has no heartfelt interest in any scheme whose success depends on paying homage to London or needs the help of the British bayonet.

2. Majlise Ahrare Islam is not prepared to ignore the fact that friendly negotiations and peaceful atmosphere are conditions precedent for help in the final decision whether one or more centres are to be established in India, or whether its provinces are to retain their present boundaries or undergo redistribution.

3. Majlise Ahrar considers all provocative propaganda already done, or being done, by any party, whatsoever, fatal to the interests of future India or the establishment of Akhand Bharat or Pakistan or Azad Punjab; and therefore the Majlis appeals to the protagonists of every scheme to refrain from speeches, writings and all other propaganda likely to poison the atmosphere in the country, and thus refrain from creating hurdles in their own path.

4. In view of the conditions prevailing in the country, Majlise Ahrar has already decided that at present it is incumbent on us to save the country from

internal disturbances of communal or economic type and therefore all energies should be concentrated on that work. Hence just as the Majlis is not in conflict with the Government it does not wish any conflict with any group or party on religious or political grounds; and just as it does not like any conflict with Hindus, Sikhs, Christians or others, it does not consider any internal conflict between the Muslims as justifiable.

5. Although Majlise Ahrar does not consider it advisable to demand any rights from the British Government at the present juncture and prefers to consign its fate to the hands of the Almighty, nevertheless it does not wish to stand in the way of any settlement between the Hindus and the Muslim League and the Congress. The Majlis does not feel any great interest in these settlements, yet it does not like to hinder those who wish to make any such efforts at the present time. Under the circumstances it does not consider it advisable to create ill-will among the Muslims by making separate effort for any communal settlement, and makes it clear beyond doubt, that whosoever wishes any settlement may negotiate with the Muslim League, or any other party he likes, but he should not expect Majlise Ahrar to entangle itself in such affairs and create internecine warfare among the Muslims.

6. Majlise Ahrar wishes to make it quite explicit that it does not consider it a religious, real and final duty of the Muslims to create or defend any geographical, racial, linguistic or other boundaries, but that on the other hand, under all circumstances, following the path shown by God and his Prophet, living virtuously in the world, cooperating with virtue, establishing States based on virtue and encouraging virtue in this world is the divine purpose of human creation, and Majlise Ahrar desires the establishment of Godly States wherever possible in this world, so that it may be demonstrated to the world that by following the golden principles of Islam this world can be cured of its afflictions and the way can be paved for welfare in this world and the next.

In this connection Majlise Ahrar wants to point out that a Godly State does not mean the control of the Government of any State falling into the hands of a Muslim majority or Muslim individuals, rather on the other hand such autocracies or plutocracies which tried to achieve their selfish objectives in the name of Islam only soiled the brilliant face of Islam and gave the world reason to despise Islam. This Majlis cannot feel satisfied with making a fresh experiment of that nature and handing over the reigns of Government to any party or group which has little respect for the religion of God. So the Majlis appeals to the Muslims to realise their duties in this respect fully and immediately, not to give opportunity to irreligion and profanity to prosper in the name of Islam by shutting their eyes on the necessities of establishment of a godly State, and to preach and impress on all Muslims the duty to follow the commandments of God and His Prophet.

The Communal Concord Conference

Mr. Humayun Mirza's Address

The following is the text of the speech of Mr. *Humayun Mirza* delivered at the Communal Concord Conference convened at Dewas (Junior) on the 28th. February, 1948 :—

I rejoice to be visiting Dewas State on the gracious invitation of His Highness the Maharaja to preside on the auspicious occasion of the Communal Concord Conference. Ours is a wide country and most of us know but our own corner of it while, thanks to His Highness, I have been able to add another corner. It is a very great privilege to become thus acquainted with this progressive State.

The feeling of a noble Indian Ruler for his subjects is much more than ordinary kindness and compassion. In this attachment, whose roots reach far into the past, there is something of the deep devotion of kinship. With the gratitude that it awakens, it may be felt through all divisions of class and fortune, conciliating, uniting, a healing and beneficent influence, through the whole atmosphere of this State.

I would gladly speak to you of concord that should exist among the diverse communities whose home is this land—at least concord and amity, if not immediate

unity. Despite the grave internal incidents with which this country has been confronted, there is no room for doubt that between the ideals of the present Government and those of the popular leaders there are greater affinities than ever before. We well know the discreet line of policy which the Government of India have followed since the beginning of the present administration and we must believe that they will continue it until the conclusion of their period. This will give sufficient time to the leaders of all the communities to arrive at a settlement among themselves for effecting the reorganisation of the country and the establishment of a regime representative of all communities. The series of controversies with Britain and a certain effervescence observed within this country has spread a great distrust which in the judgment of sensible people, is not justified. It would be a disaster if at the end of the war, we still found ourselves without signs of adjusting our domestic affairs satisfactorily. Justly or unjustly, it is a fact that we have been losing all our prestige as a people capable of self-government. Our imprudences and our excesses have caused foreigners to judge us as without judgment and without true patriotism, our own intemperance in judging one another perhaps contributing no little to this lamentable result.

Our communal and social problems are to be among the greatest problems of the generation just moving on to the stage of action. The attitude of the various communities toward one another, and particularly of the two major communities toward each other will be the chief problem. Already, it is imperatively demanding a solution. Gradually, as the years have passed, a separation has been going on but never so rapidly as of late. Each has come to regard the other as an enemy, with no interests in common, conceiving rather that what is for the interests of one must necessarily be to the detriment of the other. It is indeed time to waken up to these facts and conditions; for they must be squarely met.

Our big men to-day as of yore think of the country, and what they could make it and not what they could make out of it. The right sort of Indian isn't extinct by any means. And invisible among our four hundred millions there is a quiet legion, living untainted in the depths. Away down deep there's a cry of kinship in each one of us; and that the one nor the other hears it, has been as much the fault of the one as of the other. We see that very well now. We must thrash out *together* the way to an understanding; an agreement is not in the least necessary. We could agree to differ, for that matter, with perfect cordiality, but an understanding we must reach. Of course, we have a family quarrel, but we are a family all the same, and a fine one, too. We know each other, we visit each other. We write letters, send presents. We, in short, have joined hands from one generation to another. There is a permanent something within us—a Greater Self—a permanent something, which has created all the religions all over the earth from the beginning, and of which Islam and Hinduism themselves are merely two of the present temples. "Wherever I look", once said Ramkrishna, who was one of the greatest religious teachers of our time, for he taught that every religion is true and a possible way of reaching God,—“Wherever I look, I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—Hindus, Mohamedans, Brahmins, Vaishnavas and the rest. But they never reflect that he who is called Krishna is also called Siva, and bears the name of the Primal Energy, Jesus, and Allah—the same Rama with a thousand names.” In this message is a means of ending those bitter feuds and quarrels which in the name of religion have been, and still are a curse to humankind.

Our life is full of discord; but by forbearance this same discord can be turned to harmony. It must be left to time and the impulse of educational influences to afford the opportunity for the subsidence of fundamental differences. Therefore, it is not so much a question of legislation or of education and right doing. Whatever India's political evolution—whether on linguistic bases or any other—the problem of minorities will remain. The minority communities are the majority communities' sacred trust. The good of the whole depends upon the good of each, and the good of each makes the good of the whole. Let the majorities, then, attend to the safeguarding of the religion, language and culture of the minorities and let there be a proper representation of the minorities in the respective legislatures and services and the whole will take care of itself. Let each individual, irrespective of caste or creed, minority or majority, work in harmony with every other in the various spheres of the activities of their Provinces and States and harmony will pervade the whole. The old theory of competition—that in order to have great advancement, great progress, we must have great competition to induce it—is as false as it is savage and detrimental in its nature. We are just reaching that point where the wiser men and women are beginning to

see its falsity. They are recognising the fact that not competition, but co-operation, reciprocity, is the great, the true power—to climb, not by attempting to drag, to keep down one's fellows, but by aiding them, and being in turn aided by them, thus combining, and so multiplying the power of all instead of wasting a large part one against the other. Each is but a part, a member, of the great civil body; and no member, let alone the entire body, can be perfectly at ease, when any other part is in disease. No one part of the community, no one part of the nation, can stand alone; all are dependent, interdependent. This is the uniform teaching of history from the remotest times in the past right through to the present. A most admirable illustration of this fact—if indeed the word “admirable” can be used in connection with a matter so deplorable—is our trouble to-day. We will all be wise in our time to learn from experiences of this terrific nature. That the combination of the various communities is a matter of the greatest difficulty is reason rather for serious effort to overcome it, than for impatiently rejecting all overtures for a friendly settlement. The ordinary every day experiences of life show quite clearly that human intercourse is possible because of a similarity between the different minds. The capacity to understand a common language to engage in co-operation for the satisfaction of common needs these and a thousand other things reveal an essential likeness which transcends the elements of diversity and of opposition. Yet beyond these similarities, the very nature of many of the diversities is such that they are able to fit together to make a wider and richer whole. I believe that the key to India's salvation lies with our Indian Rulers. The Indian Ruler of to-day, whether he be of the same race as his people or not, is still regarded as their *Ma Bap* as he was thousands of years ago. His word is above dispute and his merest wish is a command. He is the sun of the local firmament, and his office is inseparable from his person; his features are familiar in every village, and it is his personal festivals, his birthdays and his wedding-days, that are the great holidays of the people, and lend colour and interest to their lives. Born to such leadership, we may look to them with confidence to continue to accord sympathy and support to the purposes of a conference such as this, convened on the initiative of His Highness Maharaja Shrimant Sadashiv Rao Khase Sahab Pawar of Dewas Junior.

The All India Jat Conference

31st. Session—Lahore—27th. March 1943

Proceedings and Resolutions

A call to the Jats of India to organise themselves for the protection of their political and economic rights and as a martial race to make an all-out effort for the successful prosecution of the war was made by *Captain Naunihal Singh*, Member of the National Defence Council, in the course of his presidential address at the annual session of the all-India Jat Conference which opened at Lahore on the 27th. March 1943.

The Conference concluded its session on the next day, the 28th. March in the afternoon after passing a series of resolutions including the one moved by Sir *Chhoturam* Revenue Minister, Punjab, calling upon the Jats to assemble on one platform irrespective of their religious faiths and to organise a central Jat organisation in the Punjab with branches in all districts.

Sir *Chhoturam* made an appeal for two lakhs of rupees to be utilised on the organisation of the Jat community to safe-guard their political and economic rights. In response to the appeal donations amounting to Rs. 12,000 were announced on the spot.

Another resolution moved by *Khan Bahadur Chaudhari Riasat Ali*, M.L.A., strongly urged the Government not to control the prices of food grains. It also adopted a resolution, moved by Mr. *Chaudhari Tikka Ram*, M.L.A., promising co-operation to other political organisations for the attainment of independence by all constitutional means.

Captain Naunihal Singh, member of the National Defence Council, in his concluding remarks, advised the Jats to maintain their glorious martial traditions by offering unstinted support in the successful prosecution of the war.

Mahatma Gandhi's Fast

India Government's Communique

Mahatma Gandhi undertook a fast of three weeks' duration from the 10th of February 1943. A Government of India Press Communique issued in this connection said that it was to be a fast according to capacity and during it, *Mahatma Gandhi* proposed to add juices of citrus fruit to water to make the water drinkable, as his wish was not to fast to death but to survive the ordeal. *Gandhiji* intended originally to start his fast on February 9, but later changed the date to the 10th. The following is the full text of the communique:

"Mr. *Gandhi* has informed H.E. the Viceroy that he proposes to undertake a fast of three weeks' duration from February 10. It is to be a fast according to capacity, and during it Mr. *Gandhi* proposes to add juices of citrus fruit to water to make water drinkable, as his wish is not to fast to death but to survive the ordeal.

"The Government of India deplore the use of the weapon of fasting to achieve political ends. There can, in their judgment, be no justification for it, and Mr. *Gandhi* has himself admitted in the past that it contains an element of coercion.

"The Government of India can only express their regret that Mr. *Gandhi* should think it necessary to employ such a weapon on this occasion and should seek justification for it in anything which Government may have said or done in connexion with the movement initiated by him and his co-workers in the Congress Party.

"The Government of India have no intention on their part of allowing the fast to deflect their policy. Nor will they be responsible for its consequences on Mr. *Gandhi's* health. They cannot prevent Mr. *Gandhi* from fasting. It was their wish, however, that if he decided to do so, he should do so as a free man and under his own arrangements, so as to bring out clearly that the responsibility for any fast and its consequences rested exclusively with him.

"They accordingly informed Mr. *Gandhi* that he would be released for the purpose and for the duration of the fast of which he had notified them, and with him any members of the Party living with him who may wish to accompany him. Mr. *Gandhi* in reply has expressed his readiness to abandon his intended fast if released, failing which he will fast in detention. In other words it is now clear that only his unconditional release could prevent him from fasting. This, the Government of India are not prepared to concede. Their position remains the same, that is to say, they are ready to set Mr. *Gandhi* at liberty for the purpose and duration of his fast. But if Mr. *Gandhi* is not prepared to take advantage of that fact and if he fasts while in detention, he does so solely on his own responsibility and at his own risk. He would be at liberty in that event to have his own medical attendants, and also to receive visits from friends with the permission of Government during its period.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT

"The Government of India propose to issue, in due course, a full statement on the origin and development of the movement which was initiated in August last, and the measures which Government have been compelled to adopt to deal with it, but they think this is a suitable occasion for a brief review of the events of the last few months.

"Mr. *Gandhi* in his correspondence with the Viceroy has repudiated all responsibility for the consequences which have flowed from the 'Quit India' demand which he and the Congress Party have put forward. This contention will not bear examination. Mr. *Gandhi's* own statement, before the movement was launched, envisaged anarchy as an alternative to the existing order and referred to the struggle 'as a fight to the finish,' in the course of which he would not 'hesitate to run any risk, however great.' As much has been made of his offer to meet the Viceroy, it is necessary to point out that at a Press interview on July 14, after the Working Committee resolution was passed, Mr. *Gandhi* stated that there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation, there was no question of one more chance; after all it was an open rebellion which was to be as short and as swift as possible.

"His last message was 'do or die.' The speeches of those most closely

associated with Mr. *Gandhi* have been even more explicit, and have given a clear indication of what the Congress High Command had in mind in launching their attack—an attack which would, if realised, have most seriously imperilled the whole cause of the United Nations—against Government as by law established and against the agencies and services by which the life of the country was being conducted, in a period, be it noted, of exceptional stress and strain, and of grave danger to India from Japanese aggression.

CIRCULAR OF JULY 29

"The instructions issued by the various Congress organisations, contained in leaflets which were found to be freely circulating in almost every part of India and which, on the evidence, cannot all be disowned as unauthorised, gave specific directions as to the methods which were to be employed for bringing the administration to a stand-still.

"The circular of July 29 emanating from the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee is an instance in point. It is noteworthy in this connexion that in widely separated areas all over the country identical methods of attacks on railways and other communications were employed, requiring the use of special implements and highly technical knowledge. Control rooms and block instruments in railway stations came in for special attention, and destruction of telegraph and telephone lines and equipment was carried out in a manner which denoted careful planning and close knowledge of their working. If these manifestations of rebellious activities are to be regarded as the result not of Congress teachings, but as a manifestation of the popular resentment against the arrest of Mr. *Gandhi* and the Congress leaders, the question may well be asked to which section of the public the tens of thousands of men engaged in these violent and subversive activities belonged. If it is claimed that it is not Congressmen who have been responsible, it would be extraordinary, to say the least, if the blame were to be laid on non-Congress elements. The country is, in effect, asked to believe that those who own allegiance to the Congress Party have behaved in an exemplary non-violent manner and that it is persons who are outside the Congress fold who have registered their resentment at the arrest of the leaders of a movement which they did not profess to follow.

"A more direct answer to the argument is to be had in the fact that known Congressmen have been repeatedly found engaged in incitements to violence, or in prosecuting Congress activities which have led to grave disorders.

"That political parties and groups outside the Congress Party have no delusions on the subject may be judged from the categorical way in which they have dissociated themselves from the movement, and condemned the violence to which it has given rise. In particular, the Muslim League has, on more than one occasion, emphasised the character and intentions of the policy pursued by the Congress Party. As early as the 20th of August last, the Working Committee of the League expressed the view reiterated many times since, that by the slogan 'Quit India' what was really meant was supreme control of the government of the country by the Congress, and that the mass civil disobedience movement had resulted in lawlessness and considerable destruction of life and property.

"Other elements in the political life of the country have expressed themselves in a similar vein, and if followers of the Congress persist in their contention that the resultant violence was no part of their policy or programme, they are doing so against the weight of overwhelming evidence.

"Mr *Gandhi* in his letter to the Viceroy has sought to fasten responsibility on the Government of India. The Government of India emphatically repudiate this suggestion. It is clearly preposterous to contend that it is they who are responsible for the violence of the last few months which so gravely disorganised the normal life of the country—and, incidentally, aggravated the difficulties of the food situation—at a time when the united energies of the people might have been devoted to the vital task of repelling the enemy and of striking a blow for the freedom of India, the Commonwealth and the world."

Linlithgow-Gandhi Correspondence

The following is the correspondence which passed between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. *Gandhi*. Mr. *Gandhi* agreed to the publication of his personal letters of December 31, 1942, and January 19, 1943.

MR. GANDHI'S LETTER TO VICEROY—*New Year's Eve, 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

This is a very personal letter. I have allowed many suns to set on a quarrel

I have harboured against you, but I must not allow the old year to expire without disburdening myself of what is ranking in my breast against you. I had thought we were friends and should still love to think so. However, what has happened since the 9th of August last makes me wonder whether you still regard me as a friend. I have perhaps not come in such close touch with any other occupant of your *gadi* as with you.

Your arrest of me, the communique you issued thereafter, your reply to Rajaji and the reasons given therefor, Mr. Amery's attack on me and much else I can catalogue to show that at some stage or other you must have suspected my *bona fides*. Mention of other Congressmen in the same connexion is by the way. I seem to be the *fons et origo* of all the evils imputed to the Congress. If I have not ceased to be your friend why did you not before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me of your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts? I am quite capable of seeing myself as others see me but in this case I have failed hopelessly. I find that all the statements made about me in Government quarters in this connexion contain palpable departures from truth. I have so much fallen from grace that I could not establish contact with a dying friend. I mean Prof. Bhansali who is fasting in regard to the Chimur affair, and I am expected to condemn the so-called violence of some people reputed to be Congressmen, although I have no data for such condemnation save the heavily censored reports of newspapers. I must own that I thoroughly distrust these reports. I could write much more but I must not lengthen my tale of woe. I am sure that what I have said is enough to enable you to fill in details.

LAW OF SATYAGRAHA

You know I returned to India from S. Africa at the end of 1914 with a mission which came to me in 1906, namely, to spread truth and non-violence among mankind in the place of violence and falsehood in all walks of life. The law of *satyagraha* knows no defeat. Prison is one of the many ways of spreading the message, but it has its limits. You have placed me in a palace where every reasonable creature comfort is ensured. I have freely partaken of the latter purely as a matter of duty, never as a pleasure, in the hope that some day those that have the power will realise that they have wronged innocent men. I have given myself 6 months. The period is drawing to a close, so is my patience. The law of *satyagraha*, as I know it, prescribes a remedy in such moments of trial. In a sentence it is 'crucify the flesh by fasting.' That same law forbids its use except as a last resort. I do not want to use it if I can avoid it. This is the way to avoid it. Convince me of my error or errors and I shall make ample amends. You can send for me or send someone who knows your mind and carry conviction. There are many other ways if you have the will. May I expect an early reply? May the New Year bring peace to us all.

I am, your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI.

THE VICEROY'S REPLY—January 19, 1943

Thank you for your personal letter of December 31, which I have just received. I fully accept its personal character and I welcome its frankness. And my reply will be as you would wish it to be, as frank and as entirely personal as your letter itself.

I was glad to have your letter, for, to be as open with you as our previous relations justify, I have been profoundly depressed during recent months, first by the policy that was adopted by the Congress in August, secondly, because while that policy gave rise as it was obvious it must, throughout the country to violence and crime (I say nothing of the risks to India from outside aggression) no word of condemnation for that violence and crime should have come from you or from the Working Committee. When you were first at Poona I knew that you were not receiving newspapers, and I accepted that as explaining your silence. When arrangements were made that you and the Working Committee should have such newspapers as you desired I felt certain that the details those newspapers contained of what was happening would shock and distress you as much as it has us all, and that you would be anxious to make your condemnation of it categorical and widely known.

But that was not the case : and it has been a real disappointment to me, all the more when I think of these murders, the burning alive of police officials, the wrecking of trains, the destruction of property, the misleading of these young students which has done so much harm to India's good name, and to the Congress

Party. You may take it from me that the newspaper accounts you mention are well founded—I only wish they were not for the story is a bad one. I well know the immense weight of your great authority in the Congress movement and with the party and those who follow its lead and I wish I could feel, again speaking very frankly, that a heavy responsibility did not rest on you. (And unhappily, while the initial responsibility rests with the leaders, others have to bear the consequences, whether as law-breakers, with the results that that involves, or as the victims).

But if I am right in reading your letter to mean that in the light of what has happened you wish to retrace your steps and dissociate yourself from the policy of last summer you have only to let me know and I will at once consider the matter further, and if I have failed to understand your object you must not hesitate to let me know without delay in what respect I have done so and tell me what positive suggestion you wish to put to me. You know me well enough after these many years to believe that I shall be only too concerned to read with the same close attention as ever any message which I receive from you to give it the fullest weight, and to approach it with the deepest anxiety to understand your feeling and your motives.

MR. GANDHI'S SECOND LETTER—January 19, 1943

I received your kind letter of the 13th instant yesterday at 2-30 p.m. I had almost despaired of ever hearing from you. Please excuse my impatience.

Your letter gladdens me to find that I have not lost caste with you.

My letter of 31st December was a growl against you. Yours is a counter-growl. It means that you maintain that you were right in arresting me and you were sorry for the omissions of which, in your opinion, I was guilty.

The inference you draw from my letter is, I am afraid, not correct. I have re-read your letter in the light of your interpretation but I have failed to find your meaning in it. I wanted to fast and should still want to, if nothing comes out of our correspondence and I have to be a helpless witness to what is going on in the country, including the privations of the millions owing to the universal scarcity stalking the land.

If I do not accept your interpretation of my letter, you want me to make a positive suggestion. This, I might be able to do, only if you put me among the members of the Working Committee of the Congress.

If I could be convinced of my error or worse of which you are evidently aware I should need to consult nobody so far as my own action is concerned, to make a full and open confession and make ample amends. But I have not any conviction of error. I wonder if you saw my letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, of 23rd September, 1942. I adhere to what I have said in it and in my letter to you of 14th August 1942.

Of course, I deplore the happenings which have taken place since 9th August last. But have I not laid the whole blame for them at the door of the Government of India? Moreover, I could not express any opinion on events which I cannot influence or control and of which I have but a one-sided account. You are bound *prima facie* to accept the accuracy of reports that may be placed before you by your departmental heads. But you will not expect me to do so. Such reports have before now often proved fallible. It was for that reason that in my letter of 31st December I pleaded with you to convince me of the correctness of the information on which your conviction was based. You will, perhaps, appreciate my fundamental difficulty in making the statement you have expected me to make.

This, however, I can say from the housetop—that I am as confirmed a believer in non-violence as I have ever been. You may not know that any violence on the part of Congress workers I have condemned openly and unequivocally. I have even done public penance more than once. I must not worry you with examples. The point I wish to make is that on every such occasion I was a free man.

This time, the retracing as I have submitted lies with the Government. You will forgive me for expressing an opinion challenging yours. I am certain that nothing but good would have resulted if you had stayed your hand and granted me the interview which I had announced on the night of the 8th August I was to seek. But that was not to be. Here, may I remind you that the Government of India have before now owned their mistakes? As for instance, in the Punjab when the late General Dyer was condemned; in the United Provinces when a corner of a mosque in Cawnpore was restored; and in Bengal when Partition was annulled. All these things were done in spite of great and previous mob violence.

To sum up:—

If you want me to act singly, convince me that I was wrong and I will make ample amends.

If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members. I do plead with you to make up your mind to end the impasse.

If I am obscure or have not answered your letter fully please point out the omissions and I shall make an attempt to give you satisfaction.

I have no mental reservation.

I find that my letters to you are sent through the Government of Bombay. This procedure must involve some loss of time. As time is of the essence in this matter, perhaps you will issue instructions that my letters to you may be sent directly by the Superintendent of this camp.

VICEROY ON CONGRESS & THE DISTURBANCES—*January 25, 1943*

Many thanks for your personal letter of the 19th January, which I have just received, and which I need not say I have read with close care and attention. But I am still, I fear, in the dark. I made clear to you in my last letter that, however reluctantly the course of events and my familiarity with what has been taking place has left me no choice but to regard the Congress movement, and you as its authorised and fully empowered spokesman at the time of the decision of last August, as responsible for the sad campaign of violence and crime, and revolutionary activity which has done so much harm, and so much injury to India's credit, since last August. I note what you say about non-violence. I am very glad to read your unequivocal condemnation of violence, and I am well aware of the importance which you have given to that article of your creed in the past but the events of these last months, and even the events that are happening today show that it has not met with the full support of certain, at any rate, of your followers, and the mere fact that they may have fallen short of an ideal which you have advocated is no answer to the relations of those who have lost their lives, and to those themselves who have lost their property or suffered severe injury as a result of violent activities on the part of Congress and its supporters. And I cannot, I fear, accept as an answer your suggestion that "the whole blame" has been laid by you yourself at the door of the Government of India. We are dealing with facts in this matter and they have to be faced.

And while, as I made clear in my last letter, I am very anxious to have from you anything that you have to say or any specific proposition that you may have to make, the position remains that it is not the Government of India, but Congress and yourself, that are on their justification in this matter.

If therefore you are anxious to inform me that you repudiate or dissociate yourself from the resolution of the 9th August and the policy which that resolution represents and if you can give me appropriate assurances as regards the future, I shall, I need not say, be very ready to consider the matter further. It is of course very necessary to be clear on that point, and you will not, I know, take it amiss that I should make that clear in the plainest possible words.

I will ask the Governor of Bombay to arrange that any communication from you should be sent through him, which will, I trust, reduce delay in its transmission.

MR. GANDHI'S THIRD LETTER—*January 29, 1943*

I must thank you warmly for your prompt reply to my letter of 19th instant. I wish I could agree with you that your letter is clear. I am sure you do not wish to imply by clearness simply that you hold a particular opinion strongly. I have pleaded and would continue to plead, till the last breath, that you should at least make an attempt to convince me of the validity of the opinion you hold that the August Resolution of the Congress is responsible for the popular violence that broke out on August 9 last and after even though it broke out after the wholesale arrest of principal Congress workers. Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence?

You have not even said what part of the August Resolution is bad or offensive in your opinion. That Resolution is in no way a retraction by the Congress of its policy of non-violence. It is definitely against Fascism in every shape or form. It tenders co-operation in the war effort under circumstances which alone can make effective and nationwide co-operation possible.

Is all this open to reproach? Objection may be raised to that clause of the Resolution which contemplated civil disobedience: but that itself cannot constitute

an objection since the principle of civil disobedience is impliedly conceded in what is known as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact." Even that civil disobedience was not to be started before knowing the result of the meeting for which I was to seek from you an appointment.

Then, take the unproved, and in my opinion, unprovable, charges hurled against the Congress and me by so responsible a minister as the Secretary of State for India.

Surely I can say with safety that it is for Government to justify their action by solid evidence not by mere *ipse dixit*.

But you throw in my face the facts of murders by persons reputed to be Congressmen. I see the fact of murders as clearly, I hope, as you do. My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so because it is organised on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic Law of truth for truth by that of 10,000 for 1—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic Law, i.e., of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of the all-powerful Government of India.

Add to this tale of woe the privations of the poor millions due to India-wide scarcity which I cannot help thinking might have been largely mitigated, if not altogether prevented, had there been a bonafide National Government responsible to a popularly elected assembly.

If then I cannot get soothing balm for my pain I must resort to the law prescribed for satyagrahis, namely, a fast according to capacity. I must commence after the early morning breakfast of February 8 a fast for 21 days ending on the morning of March 2. Usually, during my fasts I take water with the addition of salt. But nowadays, my system refuses water. This time, therefore, I propose to add juices of citrus fruit to make water drinkable. For my wish is not to fast unto death, but to survive the ordeal, if God so wills. This fast can be ended sooner by the Government giving the needed relief.

I am not marking this letter personal as I did the two previous ones. They were in no way confidential. They were a mere personal appeal.

The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material fact that the Congress by its August Resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting *Q. A. Jinnah* to form a National Government subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such Government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except *Shrimati Sarojini Devi*, I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind.

LORD LINLITHGOW'S REPLY—February 5th. 1943.

Many thanks for your letter of January 29, which I have just received. I have read, as always, with great care and with every anxiety to follow your mind and to do full justice to your argument. But I fear that my view of the responsibility of Congress and of yourself personally for the lamentable disorders of last autumn remains unchanged.

2. In my last letter I said that my knowledge of the facts left me no choice but to regard the Congress movements and you as its authorized and fully empowered leader at the time of the decision of last August as responsible for the campaign of violence and crime that subsequently broke out. In reply, you have reiterated your request that I should attempt to convince you that my opinion is correct. I would readily have responded earlier to that request were it not that your letters have no indication, such as I should have been entitled to expect, that you sought the information with an open mind. In each of them you have expressed profound distrust of the published reports of the recent happenings, although in your last letter, on the basis of the same information, you have not hesitated to lay the whole blame for them on the Government of India. In the same letter, you have stated that I cannot expect you to accept the accuracy of the official reports on which I rely. It is not, therefore, clear to me how you expect or ever desire me to convince you of anything. But in fact, the Government of India have never made any secret of their reasons for holding the Congress and its leaders responsible for the deplorable acts of violence, sabotage and terrorism that have occurred since the Congress Resolution of August 8 declared a "mass struggle" in

support of its demands, appointed you as its leader and authorised all Congressmen to act for themselves in the event of interference with the leadership of the movement.

CONCERTED PLAN

A body which passes a Resolution in such terms is hardly entitled to disclaim responsibility for any events that followed it. There is evidence that you and your friends expected this policy to lead to violence and that you were prepared to condone it, and that the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders. The general nature of the case against the Congress has been publicly stated by the Home Member, Government of India, in his speech in the Central Legislative Assembly on September 15 last, and if you need further information I would refer you to it.

I enclose a complete copy in case the Press versions that you must have seen were not sufficient. I need only add that all the mass of evidence that has since come to light has confirmed the conclusions then reached. I have ample information that the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions, circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee; that well-known Congressmen have organised and freely taken part in acts of violence and murder; and that, even now, an underground Congress organisation exists in which, among others, the wife of a member of the Congress Working Committee plays a prominent part, and which is actively engaged in planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism that have disgusted the whole country. If we do not act on all this information, or make it publicly known, it is because the time is not yet ripe; but you may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later, and it will then be for you and your colleagues to clear yourselves before the world if you can. And if, in the meanwhile, you yourself, by any action such as you now appear to be contemplating, attempt to find an easy way out, the judgment will go against you by default.

GANDHI-IRWIN PACT

3. I have read with some surprise your statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the Delhi settlement of March 5, 1931, which you refer to as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact." I have again looked at the document, its basis was that civil disobedience would be "effectively discontinued" and that certain reciprocal action would be taken by Government. It was inherent in such a document that it should take notice of the existence of civil disobedience. But I can find nothing in it to suggest that civil disobedience was recognised as being in any circumstances legitimate. And I cannot make it too plain that it is not so regarded by my Government.

4. To accept the point of view which you put forward would be to concede that the authorised Government of the country, on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow subversive and revolutionary movements, described by you yourself as open rebellion, to take place unchallenged; that they should allow preparations for violence, for the interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for the murder of police officers and others to proceed unchecked. My Government and I are open indeed to the charge that we should have taken drastic action at an earlier stage against you and against the Congress leaders. But my anxiety and that of my Government, has throughout been to give you, and to give the Congress organisation, every possible opportunity to withdraw from the position which you have decided to take up. Your statements of last June and July, the original resolution of the Working Committee of July 14, and your declaration on the same day that there was no room left for negotiations, and that after all, it was an open rebellion, are all of them grave and significant, even without your final exhortation to "do or die." But with a patience that was perhaps misplaced, it was decided to wait until the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee made it clear that there could be no further toleration of the Congress attitude if Government was to discharge its responsibility to the people of India.

5. Let me in conclusion say how greatly I regret, having regard to your health and your age, the decision that you tell me that you now have in mind to take. I hope and pray that wiser counsels may yet prevail with you. But the decision whether or not to undertake a fast with its attendant risks is clearly one that must be taken by you alone, and the responsibility for which and for its consequences must rest on you alone. I trust sincerely that in the light of what I have said you may think better of your resolution; and I would welcome a decision

on your part to think better of it, not only because of my own natural reluctance to see you wilfully risk your life, but because I regard the use of a fast for political purposes as a form of political blackmail (*Himsa*) for which there can be no moral justification, and understood from your own previous writings that this was also your view.

MR. GANDHI'S FOURTH LETTER—*February 7, 1943*

I have to thank you for your long reply dated February 5 last. I would take your last point first, namely, the contemplated fast which begins on February 9. Your letter, from a satyagrahi's standpoint, is an invitation to fast. No doubt the responsibility for the step, and its consequences will be solely mine. You have allowed an expression to slip from your pen for which I was unprepared. In the concluding sentence of the second paragraph you describe the step as an attempt "to find an easy way out." That you, as a friend, can impute such a base and cowardly motive to me passes comprehension. You have also described it as "a form of political blackmail." And you quote my previous writings on the subject against me. I abide by my writings. I hold that there is nothing inconsistent in them with the contemplated step. I wonder whether you have yourself read those writings.

I do claim that I have approached you with an open mind when I asked you to convince me of my error. "Profound distrust" of the published reports is in no way inconsistent with my having an open mind.

You say that there is evidence that I—I leave my friends out for the moment—"expected this policy to lead to violence," that I was "prepared to condone it," and that "the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders." I have seen no evidence in support of such a serious charge. You admit that part of the evidence has yet to be published. The speech of the Home Member, of which you have favoured me with a copy, may be taken as the opening speech of the prosecution counsel and nothing more. It contains unsupported imputations against Congressmen. Of course, he has described the violent outburst in graphic language; but he has not said why it took place when it did. You have condemned men and women before trying them and hearing their defence. Surely there is nothing wrong in my asking you to show me the evidence on which you hold them guilty. What you say in your letter carries no conviction. Proof should correspond to the canons of English jurisprudence.

If the wife of a member of the Working Committee is actively engaged in "planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism," she should be tried before a court of law and punished if found guilty. The lady you refer to could only have done things attributed to her after the wholesale arrests of August 9 last, which I have dared to describe as leonine violence.

You say that the time is not yet ripe to publish the charges against the Congress. Have you ever thought of the possibility of their being found baseless when they are put before an impartial tribunal? Or that some of the condemned persons might have died in the meanwhile, or that some of the evidence that the living can produce might become unavailable?

PRINCIPLE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

I reiterate the statement that the principle of civil disobedience implicitly conceded in the settlement of March 5, 1931, arrived at between the then Viceroy on behalf of the Government of India and myself on behalf of the Congress. I hope you know that the principal Congressmen were discharged before that settlement was even thought of. Certain reparations were made to Congressmen under that settlement. Civil disobedience was discontinued on certain conditions being fulfilled by the Government. That by itself was in my opinion, an acknowledgment of its legitimacy, of course under given circumstances. It, therefore, seems somewhat strange to find you maintain that civil disobedience "cannot be recognised as being in any circumstances legitimate" by your Government. You ignore the practice of the British Government which has recognised this legitimacy under the name of "passive resistance."

Lastly you read into my letters a meaning which is wholly inconsistent with my declaration, in one of them, of adherence to unadulterated non-violence, for, you say in your letter under reply that "acceptance of my point of view would be to concede that the authorised Government of the country on which lies the responsibilities for maintaining peace and good order, should allow movements to take place that would admit preparations for violence, interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for murders of police officers and others to

proceed unchecked." I must be a strange friend of yours whom you believe to be capable of asking for recognition of such things as lawful.

I have not attempted an exhaustive reply to the views and statements attributed to me. This is not the place, nor the time, for such a reply. I have only picked out those things which in my opinion, demanded an immediate answer. You have left me no loophole for escaping the ordeal I have set before myself. I begin it on February 9 with the clearest possible conscience. Despite your description of it as "a form of political blackmail," it is on my part meant to be an appeal to the highest tribunal for justice which I have failed to secure from you. If I do not survive the ordeal, I shall go to the Judgment Seat with the fullest faith in my innocence. Posterity will judge between you as representative of an all-powerful Government and me as a humble man who has tried to serve his country and humanity through it.

My last letter was written against time, and, therefore, a material paragraph went in as postscript. I now send herewith a fair copy typed by Peareylal who has taken Mahadeo Desai's place. You will find the postscript paragraph restored to the place where it should have been.

Annexures

The following annexures containing Mr. *Gandhi's* letter to the Viceroy on August 14 last, the Viceroy's reply thereto, and Mr. *Gandhi's* letter to the Secretary, Home Department Government of India, New Delhi, were released for publication with the Gandhi-Viceroy correspondence.

ANNEXURE 1—MR. GANDHI'S LETTER—August 14, 1942

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government Resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian colleagues can have no significance except this that in India you can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I have publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the A.I.C.C. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand.

The Resolution says: "The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope." I suppose "wiser counsels" here means abandonment of its demand by the Congress. Why should the abandonment of the demand, legitimate at all times, be hoped for by a Government pledged to guarantee independence to India? Is it a challenge that could only be met by immediate repression instead of patient reasoning with the demanding party? I venture to suggest that it is a long draft upon the credulity of mankind to say that the acceptance of the demand would plunge India into confusion. Anyway the summary rejection of the demand has plunged the nation and the Government into confusion. The Congress was making every effort to identify India with the Allied cause.

THE GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION

The Government Resolution says: "The Governor-General in Council has been aware too for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful and, in some cases, violent activities directed among other things to interruption of communications and public utility services, the organisation of strikes tampering with the loyalty of Government servants and interference with defence measures including recruitment."

This is a gross distortion of the reality. Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in nonviolent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles for nothing was to be done secretly. And why is it tampering with your loyalty if I ask you to give up a job which is harming the British people?

Instead of publishing behind the backs of principal Congressmen the misleading paragraphs, the Government, immediately they came to know of the "preparations" should have brought to book the parties concerned with the preparations. That would have been the appropriate course. By their unsupported allegations in the Resolution they have laid themselves open to the charge of unfair dealing.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measure of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent?

CONGRESS OFFER

The Government Resolution further says: "The Congress is not India's mouth piece. Yet in the interests of securing their own dominance and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have constantly impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood." It is a gross libel thus to accuse the oldest national organisation of India. This language lies ill in the mouth of a Government which has, as can be proved from published records, consistently thwarted every national effort for attaining freedom, and sought to suppress the Congress by hook or by crook.

The Government of India have not condescended to consider the Congress offer that if simultaneously with the declaration of the independence of India, they could not trust the Congress to form a stable provisional Government, they should ask the Muslim League to do so and that any national government formed by the League would be loyally accepted by the Congress. Such an offer is hardly consistent with the change of totalitarianism against the Congress.

Let me examine the Government offer. "It is that as soon as hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself with full freedom of decision and on a basis embracing all and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions." Has this offer any reality about it? All parties have not agreed now. Will it be any more possible after the war? And if the parties have to act before independence is in their hands? Parties grow up like mushrooms, for without proving their representative character, the Government will welcome them as they have done in the past and if they, the parties, oppose the Congress and its activities, though they may do lip homage to independence, frustration is inherent in the Government offer. Hence the logical cry of withdrawal first. Only after the end of British power and a fundamental change in the political status of India from bondage to freedom, will the formation of a truly representative Government, whether provisional or permanent, be possible. The living burial of the author of the demand has not resolved the deadlock, it has aggravated it.

Then the Resolution proceeds:—"The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India, uncertain as to the future, are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invaders, is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country." I do not know about the millions, but I can give my own evidence in support of the Congress statement.

DEFENCE OF INDIA

It is open to the Government not to believe the Congress evidence. No Imperial Power likes to be told that it is in peril. It is because the Congress is anxious for Great Britain to avoid the fate that has overtaken other Imperial Powers that it asks her to shed imperialism voluntarily by declaring India independent. The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. The Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India. Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary I maintain that the Congress has no interests of its own, apart from that of the whole of India and the world.

The following passage from the peroration in the Resolution is interesting:—"But on them lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different

sections of her people without fear or favour." All I can say is that it is a mockery of truth after the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. It is sad to find the Government of India claiming to hold the "balance" between the parties for which it is itself demonstrably responsible.

THE DECLARED CAUSE

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that the freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can—and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism. He dreads much more than I do the success of Fascism and Nazism. I have argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally. If, notwithstanding the common cause, the Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the allied cause that weighed with the British Government as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough. But the slaughter of truth accompanying the butchery and enforced by the falsity of which the Resolution is reeking adds strength to the Congress position.

It causes me deep pain to have to send you this long letter. But, however much I dislike your action I remain the same friend you have known me. I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you !

ANNEXURE II

THE VICEROY'S REPLY—August 22, 1942.

Thank you very much for your letter, dated August 14, which reached me only a day or two ago.

I have read, I need not say, what you have been good enough to say in your letter with very close attention, and I have given full weight to your views. But I fear in the result that it would not be possible for me either to accept the criticisms which you advance of the Resolution of the Governor-General in Council, or your request that the whole policy of the Government of India should be reconsidered.

ANNEXURE III

MR. GANDHI'S LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

(HOME DEPARTMENT)—September 23, 1942

Sir, In spite of the chorus of approval sung by the Indian Councillors and others of the present Government policy in dealing with the Congress, I venture to assert that, had the Government but awaited my contemplated letter to H. E. the Viceroy and the result thereafter no calamity would have overtaken the country. The reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided.

In spite of all that has been said to the country I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocal non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely the Government, have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness.

Since I am permitted to receive newspapers, I feel that I owe it to the Government to give my reaction to the sad happenings in the country. If the Government think that as a prisoner I have no right to address such communications, they have but to say so, and I will not repeat the mistake.

NOTE :—A formal acknowledgment was sent to this letter.

The text of certain letters, that passed between the Additional Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department and Mr. *Gandhi*, is published to supplement the Viceroy-Gandhi correspondence. Here are the letters :

Sir Richard Tottenham's Letter, February, 7th. 1943

Dear Mr. *Gandhi*,

The Government of India have been informed by H. E. the Viceroy of your intention as communicated to him of undertaking a fast for 21 days in certain circumstances. They have carefully considered the position and the conclusions that they have reached in the light of such consideration are set out in the statement of which a copy is enclosed, which they would propose, in the event of your maintaining your present intention, to release in due course to the Press.

The Government of India, as you will see from their statement, would be very reluctant to see you fast, and I am instructed to inform you that, as the statement makes clear, they would propose that, should you persist in your intention, you will be set at liberty for the purpose, and for the duration, of your fast as from the time of its commencement. During the period of your fast, there will be no objection to your proceeding where you wish though the Government of India trust that you will be able to arrange for your accommodation away from the Aga Khan's Palace.

Should you for any reason find yourself unable to take advantage of these arrangements, a decision which the Government of India would greatly regret, they will, of course, suitably amend the statement of which a copy is now enclosed before it issues. But they wish me to repeat, with all earnestness, their anxiety and their hope that the considerations which have carried so much weight with them will equally carry weight with you, and that you will not pursue your present tentative proposal. In that event no occasion will of course arise for the issue of any statement of any kind.

Yours sincerely,
R. TOTTENHAM.

MR. GANDHI'S REPLY—February, 8, 1943.

Dear Sir Richard,

I have very carefully studied your letter. I am sorry to say that there is nothing in the correspondence which has taken place between His Excellency and myself or your letter to warrant a recalling of my intention to fast. I have mentioned in my letters to H. E. the conditions which can induce prevention or suspension of the step.

If the temporary release is offered for my convenience, I do not need it. I shall be quite content to take my fast as a detainee or prisoner. If it is for the convenience of the Government, I am sorry I am unable to suit them, much as I should like to do so. I can say this much, that I, as a prisoner, shall avoid, as far as is humanly possible, every cause of inconvenience to the Government save what is inherent in the fast itself.

The impending fast has not been conceived to be taken as a free man. Circumstances may arise, as they have done before now, when I may have to fast as a free man. If, therefore, I am released, there will be no fast in terms of my correspondence above-mentioned. I shall have to survey the situation *de novo* and decide what I should do. I have no desire to be released under false pretences.

In spite of all that has been said against me, I hope not to belie the vow of truth and non-violence which alone makes life livable for me. I say this if it is only for my own satisfaction. It does me good to reiterate openly my faith when outer darkness surrounds me as it does just now.

I must not hustle Government into a decision on this letter. I understand that your letter has been dictated through the telephone. In order to give the Government enough time, I shall suspend the fast if necessary, to Wednesday next, 10th instant.

So far as the statement proposed to be issued by the Government is concerned, and of which you have favoured me with a copy, I can have no opinion. But, if I might have, I must say that it does me an injustice. The proper course would be to publish the full correspondence and let the public judge for themselves.

SIR RICHARD ON GOVT'S POSITION—February, 9, 1943

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of February 8, 1943,

which has been laid before the Governor-General in Council. The Government of India noted your decision with great regret. Their position remains the same, that is to say, they are ready to set you at liberty for the purpose and duration of your fast. But, if you are not prepared to take advantage of that fact, and if you fast while in detention, you will do so solely on your own responsibility and at your own risk. In that event you will be at liberty to have your own medical attendants and also to receive visits from friends with the permission of the Government during its period. Suitable drafting alterations will be made in the statement which the Government of India would, in that event, issue to the Press.

Resignation of Viceroy's Executive Members

The following joint statement was issued from New Delhi on the 18th February 1943 by Messrs. *M. S. Aney, N. R. Sarker and Sir H. P. Mody* :

"Our resignations from H. E. the Governor-General's Council have been announced and all that we desire to do is to say by way of explanation that certain differences arose on what we regarded as a fundamental issue (the issue of the action to be taken on *Mahatma Gandhi's* fast) and we felt we could no longer retain our offices.

"We wish to place on record our warm appreciation of the courtesy and consideration H. E. the Viceroy extended to us throughout the period during which we had the privilege of being associated with him in the Government of the country."

GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE

The following Press communique was issued on the previous day, the 17th. February 1943 :—The Hon. *Sir A. P. Mody* K. B. E., the Hon. Mr. *N. R. Sarker* and the Hon. Mr. *M. S. Aney* having tendered their resignation of the office of Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, His Excellency the Governor-General has accepted their resignations.

The All Party Leaders' Conference

Opening Day—New Delhi—19th. February 1943

MR. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S ADDRESS

About two hundred leaders, Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and British, from all parts of the country, met at New Delhi on the 19th. February 1943 to give expression, as Mr. C. *Rajagopalachari* in his address of welcome said, "to the feeling in this country that *Mahatma Gandhi* should be enabled to end his fast."

Among those present at the conference were: Mr. *M. S. Aney*, Sir *Ardeshar Dalal*, Mr. *J. R. D. Tata*, Mr. *C. Rajagopalachari*, Mr. *Bhulabhai Desai*, Dr. *S. P. Mookerjee*, Sir *Maharaj Singh*, Mr. *K. M. Munshi*, Dr. *M. R. Jayakar*, Mr. *Abdul Qaiyum*, Sir *Jagdish Prasad*, Mr. *Allah Bux*, Mr. *Arthur Moore*, Master *Tara Singh*, Sir *A. B. Ghaznavi*, Mr. *G. D. Birla*, Sir *Shri Ram*, Mr. *G. L. Mehta*, *Seth Walchand Hirachand*, Mr. *Kasturbhai Lalbhai*, Mr. *N. M. Joshi*, Dr. *B. S. Moonje*, *Raja Maheshwar Dyal*, *Pandit H. N. Kunzru*, the Rev. *J. Meckenzie*, Mr. *K. Srinivasan*, the *Maharajkumar of Vizianagram*, Mr. *K. S. Roy*, Dr. *P. N. Bannerjee*, *Sardar Sant Singh*, Mrs. *Sarala Devi Chaudhurani*, Mr. *Zahiruddin*, *Khwaja Hassan Nizami*, Dr. *Shaukat Ansari*, *Seth R. K. Dalmia*, Mr. *K. C. Neogy*, Mr. *N. C. Chatterjee*, Mr. *Shamdas P. Gidwani*, and *Gyani Kartar Singh*.

Mr. *Rajagopalachari's* opening address was amplified by loud-speakers and was listened to by 300 people, including boy and girl students who stood outside the tent in which the meeting was held.

"This gathering," said Mr. *Rajagopalachari*, "is a source of great consolation, if not strength, on the present grave occasion."

Mr. *Rajagopalachari* added: "Every heart would be gladdened if, by any means, *Mahatmaj* could be released and his fast could terminate. I do not think there can be any difference of opinion on that point, though there may be

difference of opinion as to the policies and programmes from time to time pursued by Mahatmaji or other people."

Putting himself the question what they had met for, Mr. *Rajagopalachari* said: "We have met, as far as I understand, in the spirit of the Scripture to which Mahatmaji is attached, that we should do whatever we can do, not minding the results or caring for the fruition of our labours." He added that they had gathered there to give expression to the feeling in this country that the Mahatma should be enabled to end his fast.

RELEASE WILL EASE SITUATION

Referring to the correspondence, Mr. *Rajagopalachari* said that Mahatmaji had undertaken what he called a fast to capacity. He went in some matters by the minimum and in other matters by the maximum. He had judged his capacity and taken the pledge to undergo a fast for 21 days. A twenty-one days' fast was a terribly over-estimated limit he had placed over himself, but having placed it, he was not in a position to revise it. The Government apprehended that releasing him would create difficulties. But Mr. *Rajagopalachari* declared, on behalf of the conveners, that the moment he was released, the work of the Government would be eased and would not be made difficult.

After dealing at length with the legal and other aspects of the documents published, Mr. *Rajagopalachari* said: "We ask that he should have the opportunity to review his position and give his advice to the country."

COMMITTEE DRAFTS RESOLUTION

After the speech, the meeting set up a Committee to draft a resolution to be placed before the Conference on the next day. The members of the Committee included, Mr. *Rajagopalachari*, Pandit Kunzru, Mufti Kifayatullah, Khwaja Hassan Nizami, Sheikh Mohamed Zahiruddin, Dr. Moonjee, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Sir Maharaj Singh, Sir A. H. Ghaznavi and Mr. Allah Bux.

The drafting committee adopted a resolution urging the release of Mahatma Gandhi.

Second Day—New Delhi—20th. February 1943

SIR T. B. SAPRU'S SPEECH

The second day's proceedings of the Conference began with two minutes' silent prayer in which all present joined.

Sir *Tej Bahadur Sapru*, addressing the gathering, amid frequent cheers said: I am overwhelmed by the gravity of the occasion, and I feel sure that all of you are equally overwhelmed by it. I think I can say I have joined you all on this occasion in demanding the unconditional release of Mahatma Gandhi with a clear conscience (cheers). No one knows better than Mahatmaji himself that by conviction I have always opposed civil disobedience. I have no hesitation in saying that I much regretted the resolution passed at Bombay and no one has followed the course of events since then with greater regret than I. I have not hesitated to express my candid, frank and unambiguous opinion that it was to me a matter of the deepest regret that acts of sabotage should have taken place in this country. Sir *Tej Bahadur* had no doubt that while those gathered in the conference dissociated themselves from acts of rebels and while they made appeals to the Mahatma and his friends to do everything they could to restore an atmosphere of calm and peace, they also expected that if Mahatma Gandhi was released unconditionally that would be the first preliminary step towards reconciliation which was the immediate need of the country (cheers).

Mahatma Gandhi had been called a rebel, but, said Sir *Tej Bahadur*, there was a rebel called Smuts who was rendering the greatest possible service to the Empire. There was another rebel called De Valera, whom the British Government wanted to remain in the Empire.

"I believe," Sir *Tej Bahadur* declared, "that one lesson which is reinforced by British history is that the British Government has always settled with rebels rather than with loyalists" (more cheers and laughter). "I am not downhearted when Mahatma Gandhi is put down by the Home Member as a rebel. I still live in the hope that there will be a settlement with these rebels and when it takes place men like you and me will be ignored" (laughter).

Sir *Tej Bahadur* refuted the argument that the Government could not negotiate with Gandhi because he was a "rebel."

Taking the audience back to the time of the Irish Treaty, Sir *Tej Bahadur* referred to the opinion recorded by Mr. Churchill suggesting that Mr. Lloyd

George erred in applying "tremendous onslaughts" without making "the fairest offer". The time had come when the British Government remembering their history and traditions and remembering also the change in the situation and the irrepressible urge for freedom in this country, should win over the rebels. "Those assembled here are actuated by only one motive and purpose, and that is that we must see to it that Mahatma Gandhi's life is saved."

ADHERENCE TO NON-VIOLENCE

"Here is a man whose appeal to the imagination of the country is beyond doubt, who is going to end his life. It is open to you to criticise it, but you cannot alter the fact. And if it should materialise and if unfortunately he should die within the next twenty-four or forty-eight hours, I tell you, the task of reconciliation between the British nation and Hindus, I should like to say, the Indian nation, would become extremely difficult (cheers). The task of reconciliation not only between Hindus and Muslims but between the different sections of the country will become next to impossible.

"I have read the correspondence and the only interpretation I can place is that so far as Mahatma Gandhi is concerned, his adherence to the doctrine of non-violence is as great as it ever was" (renewed cheers).

It was plain after the Cripps failure and the Allahabad meeting of the A. I. C. C. that the situation was deteriorating. If the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi were to be held responsible for the situation, no less were Government responsible.

Sir Tej Bahadur went on: "I do not wish to deviate from the main issue and that is that we shall do the best we can under the circumstances to save his life in the hope and belief—in my case it is more than belief—that if he is released the task of reconciliation will be taken in hand by him.

"We make on this occasion an appeal to the civilised conscience of Great Britain and the United Nations and we do say that if it is intended that this country shall settle down to constructive work, then it is absolutely necessary that Mahatma Gandhi should be released.

"Personally I am not in a very hopeful frame of mind because if Government intended to release him they would not have accepted the resignation of three members. But whatever may be the situation we have got our duty. We have got to show that we are anxious for reconciliation for settling down for constructive work and we are insistent that Mahatma Gandhi should be released at once". (Prolonged cheers)

Resolution

The Conference passed with acclamation the resolution moved by Dr. M. R. Jayakar, giving expression to the desire that in the interest of the future of India and of international goodwill, Mahatma Gandhi should be released immediately and unconditionally. The following is the full text of the resolution:

"This conference representing different creeds, communities and interests in India, gives expression to the universal desire of this country that, in the interest of the future of India and of international goodwill, Mahatma Gandhi should be released immediately and unconditionally. This conference views with the gravest concern the serious situation that will arise if the Government fail to take timely action and prevent a catastrophe. This conference, therefore, urges the Government to release Mahatma Gandhi forthwith."

MR. JAYAKAR'S ADDRESS

Dr. M. R. Jayakar, moving the resolution, said his plea was that the release was essentially necessary in the interests of fairness and justice. This fast, Dr. Jayakar declared, was in Mahatma Gandhi's conception the last resource of expressing protest against frustration. Six months had passed since Mahatma Gandhi and Congressmen were arrested. What had Government done during this period to explain and justify their accusations against the Congress except repeating those charges?

NEED FOR CAMPAIGN IN COUNTRY

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, whole-heartedly associating himself with the resolution, felt that the demand for the unconditional release of Gandhi should be made from a non-controversial plank so that his life may be spared. "Let Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Doctor Jayakar come out with us to lead public opinion in the country."

Sir Maharaj Singh (Indian Christian) whole-heartedly associated himself and his community with the resolution. He said, "I am not a believer in the ethics of fasting, but I urge that so far as it is humanly possible the valuable life of Mr. Gandhi should be saved. Sentiments and emotions are parts of human nature and all of us are moved to our innermost depths when a very great tragedy is about to befall us. Our duty is clear, we must do our best to save Mr. Gandhi's life." *Sir Maharaj* referred to the Linlithgow-Gandhi correspondence and particularly to Mr. Gandhi's declaration that he had unequivocally and publicly condemned violence on the part of Congressmen in the past, but that was when he was a free man. *Sir Maharaj Singh* was confident that given his freedom, Mr. Gandhi would have adopted a similar attitude towards the August disturbances. *Sir Maharaja Singh* was equally confident that the death of Mr. Gandhi under detention would leave a trail of racial bitterness which it would be difficult to remove.

Sir Haji Kassem Mitha, a member of the Council of State, from Bombay, supporting the resolution, referred to the fact that the Mahatma was revered by millions in India.

Master Tara Singh (Sikh leader) associated himself and his community with the resolution. Proceeding, he assured the conference that he was with them on any step they intended to take to implement their demand.

Dr. McKenzie, Principal, Wilson College, Bombay, said: "We, members of British Missionary societies, are in very close touch with the people of India. We take no part in politics. We are outside the sphere of political controversies. I, therefore, make no charge against anyone. Our interests in the conference is to preserve Mr. Gandhi's life and the restoration of goodwill in the country. As Christians, we hold that goodwill will be restored if Mr. Gandhi were alive. We are also concerned that this conference should not end here by merely passing a resolution, demanding the unconditional release of Mr. Gandhi. We cherish the hope that the conference will be the beginning of a new spirit in India, the beginning of a new movement to bring all parties and interests together in order to help India to reach that high position, which we all so much desire."

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru here read a letter from *Dr. McKenzie* in which he urged that everything should be done to save Mr. Gandhi's life. Simultaneously an appeal should be made to Mr. Gandhi to abandon his fast. The letter also urged the conference to condemn acts of violence, done in the name of Congress, and in violation of Mr. Gandhi's principles. Lastly, *Dr. McKenzie* suggested the convening of another conference to which people should come with open minds not committed to any principles and policies, but with the sole intention of reaching an agreement on India's problems. *Sir Tej Bahadur* said that he fully shared the view expressed by *Dr. McKenzie*. He claimed that the conference should take the logical step of making an approach for a settlement. *Sir Tej Bahadur* also expressed himself opposed to waiting in a deputation on the Viceroy. They could only appeal to the Government by forwarding their resolution.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi, supporting the resolution, said, that there were people, who disagreed with Gandhiji in practical politics, but not one soul in India wanted him to die. If, after the release, the Government found that Gandhiji pursued his activities they could again take him into detention.

Srimati Sarala Devi Chaudhrani supported the resolution.

Mr. Allah Bux (ex-Premier of Sind) supported the resolution on the ground of justice and fairplay.

Mr. N. M. Joshi supported the resolution in the name of the Trade Union Congress. He said that no single man had done so much for the poorer classes of this country than Mr. Gandhi. *Mr. Joshi* protested against the use of the word 'political blackmail.'

Maulana Ahmed Said, Secretary, Jamiat ul Ullama Hind, and *Mr. Zahiruddin*, President, Momin Conference, further supported the resolution.

Mr. Abdul Qayum (from the Frontier), supporting the resolution, asserted that he was voicing the feeling of Pathans of the Frontier province, particularly Khudai Khidmatgars. He wanted the Conference to devise methods for achieving their object.

Mr. Humayun Kabir (Calcutta) supported the resolution and said that the Bengal Assembly had backed the demand by passing a resolution almost unanimously.

Mr. G. L. Mehta (President, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce),

supported the resolution. Referring to Mr. Churchill's remarks that the commercial community was behind the Congress, Mr. Mehta said that they were proud to be a part of the national movement. Their interest, he said, was on the side of law and order. They were convinced that Gandhiji was a force working for social justice and social harmony. That was why there were some of the biggest commercial magnates present at the conference to-day.

Mr. *Randive* (Communist), supporting the resolution, said that the release of Gandhiji would release forces for unity for national demand.

Pandit H. N. Kunzru said surely the people who had gathered at the conference and were demanding the release of Gandhiji were not supporters of violence. They made the demand because they believed that Gandhiji was the biggest national asset the like of whom was seen once in centuries. To save his life was to serve the interest of international goodwill. His death under detention would leave a trail of bitterness for years to come. He claimed that in the interests of elementary justice Mr. Gandhi must be released at once.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru put the resolution to the vote of the conference, which unanimously adopted it. It was agreed that the resolution together with the names of the supporters should be sent to the Viceroy at once.

Mr. *K. M. Munshi* proposed and *Sardar Sant Singh* seconded a vote of thanks to the chair, which was carried. The conference then adjourned.

Resolution sent to Mr. Churchill & Mr. Amery

The resolution was cabled to Mr. *Churchill* and Mr. *Amery* and a copy handed to Mr. *Phillips* at New Delhi.

VICE-ROY'S REPLY

The following reply was sent to *Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru* by the Private Secretary to the Viceroy.

Dear *Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru*,

His Excellency asks me to say that he has received and considered the resolution adopted by the Conference under your Chairmanship, of which you were good enough to send him a copy to-day. The attitude of the Government of India in the matter of Mr. *Gandhi's* fast is set out clearly and in detail in the communiqué which they issued on 10th February, a copy of which I enclose for convenience of reference. No new factor has emerged since that date, and as the Government of India's communiqué brings out clearly, the responsibility in connection with his fast rests solely with Mr. *Gandhi*, with whom, and not with the Government the decision to bring it to an end must rest.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) J. G. Laithwaite.

Leaders' communiqué to Premier

The Committee of the Leaders' Conference, after its meeting on February 21, telegraphed the following *communiqué* to Mr. *Winston Churchill* in London:

"Three hundred public men from different parts of India representing various committees, creeds and interests including Commerce and Industry, Landed Interests, Workers, Communists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis and British Missionaries met yesterday at New Delhi and unanimously passed a resolution urging immediate and unconditional release of *Mahatma Gandhi* whose condition is fast approaching a crisis. We fear that unless immediately released he will pass away.

FAST EXPLAINED

"We wish to explain to British public opinion that the Mahatma is fasting only to be able to review the situation as a free man and to advise the people accordingly and not on the issue of independence. We are convinced that the terms of his letter of September 23 recently published by Government, amount to an unequivocal disapproval on behalf of himself and the Congress of all acts of violence. The Chairman of the Conference, *Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru*, submitted the resolution to the Viceroy yesterday afternoon and immediately afterwards he received a reply from the Viceroy declining to interfere as no new factor had arisen to alter the previous decision and enclosing the official communication of February 10. We deeply deplore that the advice of so many representatives and responsible men should have been summarily turned down by the Viceroy.

"We firmly believe that if the Mahatma's life is spared a way will be opened to the promotion of peace and goodwill as surely as his death as a British prisoner

will intensify public embitterment. The charges brought by Government against the Mahatma do not rest upon an examination by any impartial tribunal or independent body of men. We firmly believe that much of the trouble which has arisen was preventable by timely action on the part of Government last summer and that the Mahatma should have been allowed to see the Viceroy to find a solution as he desired.

PLEA FOR RELEASE

"Millions of our countrymen feel that the responsibility for saving the Mahatma's life now rests only with the Government. We, therefore, urge that the Mahatma should be forthwith released. As under the existing Constitution the ultimate responsibility is of the British Parliament for the peace and tranquility of India we request that this cable may be brought to its notice in order that it may do justice in the matter. We are convinced that wise and liberal statesmanship will solve the Indo-British problem more speedily and effectively than stern repression."

The Rt Hon. Sir *Tej Bahadur Sapru*, Ex-Law Member, Government of India; *C. Rajagopalachariar*, former Prime Minister, Madras; *Allah Buksh*, ex-Premier, Sind, and President of the Azad Muslim Conference; *N. C. Chatterjee*, Working President, Bengal Hindu Mahasabha; *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi*, M.L.A. (Central), President, Central National Mahomedan Association of India; *Mrs. Saraladebi Chaudhuri*, President, Women's Hindu-Muslim Unity Committee and General Secretary, Indian Women's Association; *Dr. Ashraf*, Socialist; *Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari*, General Secretary, All-India Independent Muslim Parties Federation; *B. T. Ranadive*, Central Committee, Communist Party of India; *S. P. Mookerjee* Working President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, and Ex-Finance Minister, Bengal; *Dr. B. S. Moonji*, General Secretary, All-India Hindu Mahasabha; *Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth*, Ex-Minister, United Provinces, and President, Oudh Hindu Sabha; *Bhulabhai J. Desai*, Leader of the Opposition in the Indian Legislative Assembly; *P. N. Banerjee*, M.L.A. (Central); *H. N. Kunzru*, Deputy Leader of the Progressive Party, Member of the Council of State and President, Servants of India Society; *Mrs. Hannah Sen*, Vice-President, All-India Women's Conference; *P. Subbarayan*, Member of the All-India Congress Committee, and Ex-Minister for Law, Madras; *J. R. D. Tata*, Chairman, Tata Sons; *N. M. Joshi*, M.L.A. (Central), General Secretary, All-India Trade Union Congress; *Sir Ardeshir R. Dalal*, Managing Director, Tara Iron and Steel; *Sachchidananda Sinha*, Vice-Chancellor, Patna University; *G. D. Mehta*, President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry; *Kiran Sankar Ray*, Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly; *Mahammad Ahmed Kasmi*, M.L.A. (Central); *Sewa Singh Gill*, Zamindar; *Humayan Kabir*, Vice-President, Krishak Praja Parliamentary Party and Secretary, Hindu-Muslim Unity Association; The Rt. Hon. *Dr. M. R. Jayakar*, Ex-Judge, Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; *K. M. Munshi*, former Home Minister, Bombay; *Sir Jagdish Prasad*, Ex-Member, Viceroy's Executive Council.

Premier's Reply

The following reply was sent by the Prime Minister to Sir *Tej Bahadur Sapru*, the President of the Conference:

"The Government of India decided last August that Mr Gandhi and other leaders of the Congress must be detained for reasons which have been fully explained and are well understood. The reasons for that decision have not ceased to exist and His Majesty's Government endorse the determination of the Government of India not to be deflected from their duty towards the peoples of India and of the United Nations by Mr. Gandhi's attempt to secure his unconditional release by fasting.

"The first duty of the Government of India and of His Majesty's Government is to defend the soil of India from invasion by which it is still menaced, and to enable India to play her part in the general cause of the United Nations. There can be no justification for discriminating between Mr. Gandhi and other Congress leaders. The responsibility therefore rests entirely with Mr. Gandhi himself."

Amery Echoes the Premier

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. *Amery*, answering questions in the House of Commons, on the 25th. February 1943, said that the British Government entirely agreed with the decision of the Government of India not to yield to Mr. Gandhi's efforts to enforce his unconditional release. Mr. *Amery* said: The circumstances in which the Government of India found it necessary to detain the Congress leaders are well known. The correspondence between Mr. Gandhi and the Viceroy preceding Mr.

Gandhi's fast has been published. It contains no indication that Mr. Gandhi sees cause for regret in the outbreaks of murder, violence and sabotage which followed the authorisation in August last by the Congress Party of a mass struggle. By rejecting the offer of the Government of India to release him for the period of his fast and declaring that his fast would be unnecessary if he were released, Mr. Gandhi has also made it clear that the object of the fast is simply to enforce his unconditional release.

The Government of India composed, when the decision was taken, of nine Indian and four European members, including the Viceroy, decided that they could not yield to this threat (cheers). His Majesty's Government are in entire agreement with their decision. India has a vital part to play in the general cause of the United Nations. She is still herself menaced by invasion. There can be no justification for the release of men who deliberately planned to paralyse India's defence at a most critical moment (cheers) and who have shown no sign of abandoning their criminal purpose, nor is there any reason in this respect for discrimination between Mr. Gandhi and other Congress leaders. Subject to their general decision, the Government of India have wished to show Mr. Gandhi every consideration. He has at the Aga Khan's Palace his own medical attendants as well as those provided by the Government and is allowed, subject to their advice and to Government's permission, to receive visitors."

There were protests and some interruption when Labourite, Mr. *Sorensen* asked for an early debate "in view of the very real concern in some parts of the Commons and the country."

Mr. *Amery* replied that was a question for the Leader of the House to deal with. Replying to a suggestion that the situation might be eased if Mr. Gandhi was placed among the interned leaders of the Congress Working Committee, Mr. *Amery*, amid cheers said, "I leave that to the judgment of the Government of India."

Labourite, Mr. *Shinwell* requested Mr. *Amery* to produce evidence supporting the implication in his statement that Mr. Gandhi was responsible for the outbreak of violence.

Mr. *Amery*: A good deal has been produced, but fuller matter is *en route* from India and will be published on arrival.

There were cries of 'no' when Labourite Mr. *Kirkwood* suggested that Mr. Gandhi's unconditional release would be a sign of strength not weakness.

Mr. *Mander* (Liberal) asked if Indian leaders had appealed to Mr. Gandhi to abandon his fast in public interest.

Mr. *Nicholson* (Conservative) said that the Government of India was earning universal respect by recognition of its primary duty—maintenance of conditions under which the masses of Indians could lead orderly normal lives. Mr. *Amery* made no reply to these further points.

Mr. *Sorensen* questioned Mr. *Amery* regarding the letter stated to have been sent by Mr. Gandhi to the Secretary of State.

Mr. *Amery* replied: "The whole correspondence which passed between Mr. Gandhi and the Viceroy and the Government of India has been given to the Press. No letter was addressed to me by Mr. Gandhi. The Government of India's statement of Congress responsibility for the disturbances will likewise be given full publicity as soon as it is received here."

Mr. *Sorensen* said that Mr. Gandhi had referred to such a letter and asked Mr. *Amery* to enquire why he never received it.

Mr. *Amery*: "I have no doubt that if a letter had been addressed to me by Mr. Gandhi and sent to the Government of India, it would have reached me."

Later, the Leader of the Commons, Mr. *Eden* rejected a request by the Labour leader, Mr. *Greenwood*, for an early debate on India. Mr. *Eden* said: "The Government's view is that in the present state of affairs respecting Mr. Gandhi's fast, a debate would serve no useful purpose, indeed rather the reverse. But, of course, we will review the situation as it develops."

Independent Labourite, Mr. *Maxton* asked if it would not be better to debate the situation before any tragedy happened rather than afterwards.

Mr. *Eden*: "I did carefully consider the reply I have given. It is Government's considered view that no useful purpose would be served by a debate at present."

The Mahatma breaks his Fast

Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast on the 3rd. March 1943 at 9-34 a.m. I.S.T. (and 8-34 a.m. according to time maintained at the Aga Khan Palace). All the six doctors who

have been attending on him during his 21 days' fast were present. Beside the doctors only inmates of the detention camp were present.

It was a brief but impressive ceremony, performed with due solemnity and devotion, that preceded *Mahatma Gandhi's* breaking of the fast. *Mahatma Gandhi* was in a meditative mood and was lying on the cot in the room where he fasted.

The earliest to arrive at the Aga Khan Palace was Dr. B. C. Roy and at 9 a. m. the Surgeon-General to the Government of Bombay, Maj-Gen. R. H. Candy, Lt.-Col. M. G. Bhandari and Lt.-Col. B. Z. Shah drove in.

The inmates of the Palace sang *Mahatma Gandhi's* favourite hymn "Vaishnava Janatho" and two stanzas from Poet Tagore's "Gitanjali" "Lead Kindly Light" and the Quoran were also recited.

After prayers, those present observed a five minutes' silence. With folded hands *Mahatma Gandhi* was seen to close his eyes and to be in meditation.

Prayers over Kasturba, wife of *Mahatma Gandhi*, handed him a glass containing six ounces of orange juice. He is reported to have taken twenty minutes to sip the juice.

Before sipping it, the *Mahatma*, in a feeble voice, thanked the doctors for the great care and attention which they bestowed on him and said that more than anything else it was their love and affection for him that must have saved his life. Further, he told those present, there must be something higher than the doctors' power that had saved him.

Immediately after *Gandhiji* had sipped the juice, Mrs. Surojini Naidu, who was dressed in a deep mauve silk saree, rustled into the room and served fruit juice to the doctors present. None in the room talked except Mrs. Naidu, who insisted that the doctors should have another glass of juice.

Looking worn out and grave, the *Mahatma* reclined propped up by pillows on the bed.

Dr. B. C. Roy on the Fast

"Full control of the mind over the body and strong determination to live, for which he fought every inch of the ground—this was how *Gandhiji* could tide over the crisis that threatened his life at one stage of the fast", said Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, who attended on *Gandhiji*, in an exclusive interview to the 'United Press' prior to his leaving Poona on the 4th. March.

"*Gandhiji* helped his doctors so far as elimination is concerned", said Dr. Roy. "He tried to take as much water as possible—plain water and water mixed with salts or with sweet lime juice which also contains salts. In the world of to-day physical organs of body get more and more under the control of mind. Many of the physical functions like hunger and thirst and the different type of secretions and excretions are being brought more and more under the control of higher centres. That is why the modern man is so complex as compared to the village man of older days".

"In the case of *Gandhiji*", Dr. Roy added, "partly as a result of the forces operating in all of us and partly as a result of self-discipline, by which he has deliberately brought the physical function under the control of his mind, the functions of the different organs of his body are being more and more directed by the central nervous system. Therefore, our forecasts proved to be erroneous. We could only depend upon the law of averages and could only give our opinion on the basis of what would happen to an average man under similar conditions".

Dr. Roy on the significance of the Fast

"I do not know why Providence has saved me on this occasion. Possibly, it is because, He has some more mission for me to fulfil"—this was what *Mahatma Gandhi* said after the fast was over, revealed Dr. B. C. Roy, presiding at a meeting of the staff and students of the Calcutta University held at the Darbhanga Hall on the 7th. March 1948 in observance of the Thanks-giving Day for the successful termination of *Mahatmaj's* fast.

After offering his heart-felt prayers to the Almighty for having saved *Mahatmaj's* life, Dr. Roy gave his impressions of "the *tapasya* (penance) of a great devotee" which he witnessed. "The whole fast", he said, "was in the nature of a religious ceremony. If you start from the beginning and go on to the end, you will perceive that the whole thing was conceived by him as part and parcel of a religious ceremony. He started by informing the Government that under certain conditions, he was prepared to undertake a fast, which he called a 'capacity fast'. I think the expression has not been properly understood by the people. The expression 'capacity fast' was used in contradiction to another expression which, he

used in 1932, namely, 'fast unto death'. In this instance he mentioned definitely that it was not his desire to die, but that he would fast for 21 days because that was in his opinion the period which he had to-day before himself as a period of *tapasya*."

Dr. Roy explained that *Mahatmaj*i took citrus juice with water only to give his system sufficient opportunity of expelling all the waste that must have been generating in his body in a large quantity due to the fast. He said that that was the only way in which he could give himself and the doctors the opportunity of getting proper elimination of the waste products from the system.

"KEPT HIMSELF IN TUNE WITH INFINITY"

Continuing Dr. Roy said: "*Mahatmaj*i started his fast with prayer and he ended his fast with prayers and throughout the period, he had kept himself in tune with Infinity. Day in and day out, while he was being nursed by doctors and nurses, he was always in a state of communion with the Higher Power. I can assure you, and through you, all in the country, that the whole period of his fast, the way he fought Death, the manner in which, from hour to hour he waited patiently for the successful termination of the fast, were something of a privilege to witness. It was like watching a *yagna*, like watching a devotee at his prayers and after these prayers were over, I saw him shut his eyes, leaning against the doors, I dare say, to feel the presence of the Almighty nearer his heart and then he broke his fast."

Concluding, Dr. Roy said: "*Mahatma Gandhi* has been saved for us. What were the forces that operated, none of us knew. We had issued a statement on one day that if the fast was not ended, it might be difficult to save him. That is what we felt, that is what we were apprehensive of. Every minute during that fateful evening, night and the next morning was important. But the tide turned and the Almighty willed otherwise, and we pray to God that he might live with us for many more years."

Release of Mahatma Gandhi

The All India Leaders' Statement

Bombay—9th. and 10th, March 1943

The All-India leaders, who had been meeting in Bombay on the 9th. & 10th. March 1943 at the residence of Dr. M. R. Jayakar, issued the following statement:

"We are of opinion that the deplorable events of the last few months require a reconsideration of their policy both by the Government and the Congress. The recent talks which some of us have had with *Gandhiji* lead us to believe that a move for reconciliation at the present juncture will bear fruit.

"It is our conviction that if *Gandhiji* is set at liberty, he will do his best to give guidance and assistance in the solution of the internal deadlock and that there need be no fear that there would be any danger to the successful prosecution of the war.

"The Viceroy may be approached on our behalf to permit a few representatives to meet *Gandhiji* to authoritatively ascertain his reaction to the recent events and to explore with him avenues for reconciliation."

The statement was signed by 36 leaders, including *Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru*, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and *Sir Jagdish Prasad*.

The following leaders were present at the meetings:—*Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru*, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. G. D. Birla, *Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas*, Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, Mr. K. M. Munshi, *Sir Ardesir Dalal*, Mr. J. R. D. Tata, Mr. S. A. Brelvi, Mr. Walchand Hirachand, *Sir Chunilal Bhaichand Metha*, *Sir Homi Modi*, Mr. Devadas Gandhi, Master Tara Singh, Mr. S. Ramanathan, Mr. G. L. Mehta, Mr. Alla Bux, *Sir Jagdish Prasad*, Mr. Kasturibhai Lalbhai and Dr. Mackenzie.

Mr. V. D. Savakar was unable to be present but signified his assent to the statement issued. Besides, the following leaders who could

not be present in Bombay were in agreement with the statement and copies of the statement were posted to them to obtain their signatures.

Mr. K. Srinivasan, Mr. C. R. Srinivasan, Mr. N. R. Sarker, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee, Mr. Thakkar, Raja Maheshwardayal Seth, Dr. P. Subbarayan, Pandit Hridaynath Kanzru, Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi, Mr. N. M. Joshi, Sardar Sant Singh and M. S. Aney.

Leaders' Memorandum to Viceroy

On the 1st, April 1943, it was announced that the Viceroy had declined to give facilities to Mr. Rajagopalachariar and other leaders for contact with Mahatma Gandhi under existing conditions. The Deputation asked His Excellency to accept their statement, with certain additions which they had incorporated in it, as officially presented to him, with a view to publication with the Viceroy's reply, and to dispense with their personal attendance. His Excellency readily agreed to this request.

The Leaders' Memorandum ran as follows :

"We are submitting this memorandum in accordance with His Excellency's desire that he should have a written statement precisely explaining what we wish to say to which His Excellency proposes to give a written reply. While we do so, we hope that the helpful spirit in which we approach this matter also animates His Excellency and that it is with a completely open mind that he will receive the deputation.

"We are glad that His Excellency has found the resolution of Bombay Conference of 9th and 10th March perfectly clear. We have therein expressed a desire that His Excellency should permit a few of us to meet Gandhiji, who is under detention, to ascertain authoritatively his reactions to the events which have happened since his arrest and to explore with him avenues for reconciliation. If His Excellency has no objection to this, we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity and discuss matters with Gandhi. We will then go to His Excellency again and place our proposals before him. In case His Excellency has any objections to following this course, we should like to be informed of the objections, so that we may try to answer them, and for this purpose we desire an interview with His Excellency.

"We have carefully read the correspondence which has passed between His Excellency and Gandhiji and which has been published. We feel that Gandhiji has already expressed his disapproval of violence and sabotage, and we have no doubt that he will cast his influence on the side of internal harmony and reconciliation.

"The correspondence and statements published in connection with the fast have themselves discouraged the disturbances and the contemplated meeting with Gandhiji will, in our view, further the same object.

"GANDHIJI'S HELP ESSENTIAL FOR RESTORING GOODWILL"

"We feel that, though order might have been restored on the surface, every day that passes without a solution of the Indian problem intensifies the hostility between Britain and India, and renders any future solution more and more difficult to attain, until, we apprehend, it may become even impossible. We are convinced that Gandhiji's assistance is essential for the restoration of goodwill and for a solution of the problem even for the interim period, including an adjustment of Hindu-Muslim claims. On the other hand, unpleasant as it is, we cannot help feeling that, refusing to permit us to have contact with Gandhiji now would be equivalent to a determination on the part of Great Britain that there should be no attempt at a settlement of the problem and no reconciliation between Nationalist India and Britain. Whatever may be the immediate administrative convenience thereof, we hope that His Excellency will not take up this attitude. We feel that though there is no present danger of Axis aggression in India, the strained relation between Government and the people is fraught with grave evil and all that is possible should be done to replace it by a better feeling.

"As the war is getting long drawn out, measures to solve the economic problems arising out of it, as well as plans for increasing the production of food and other essential articles and improving transport and distribution as well as measures of control, have to be evolved. Such measures can be organised and regulated only by a national administration or a Government that can reasonably claim to approach that character and is in a position to justify policies adopted from time to time although they may involve considerable hardships on all sections of people,

The situation is growing more and more serious every day, and we feel that a Government commanding the loyal and affectionate co-operation of all the people can be constituted for the period of the war, only if we are permitted to talk with Gandhiji, consult him and obtain his support. The request that we make is intended to achieve this object. It cannot hurt the Government or the war effort in the least and in our view, is likely to lead to constructive results.

Viceroy's Reply to the Memorandum

The following is the text of His Excellency the Viceroy's reply :

"I am greatly obliged to you for the expression of your views which you have been kind enough to let me have and for giving me the opportunity of considering it in advance. The matter is one of great importance and I am anxious that there should be no misunderstanding in relation to it. I made clear, in my correspondence with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, my readiness that your deputation should in their statement amplify or emphasise any particular points in the Bombay Resolution to which they attached importance and indicate the arguments on which they based their suggestions. I am indebted to you for the memorandum you have let me have, though it is with regret that I do not find in it any fresh argument in support of the suggestions which the Leaders' Conference has put forward and that I do not find that unequivocal condemnation of the Congress campaign of violence which the public and I are entitled to expect from you as representing that Conference.

"Let me, before I proceed to your specific proposals, mention, though in no spirit of criticism, that I observe from the list of signatories that the great Muslim community was practically unrepresented at the Conference of Leaders, and that that body contained no representative of the Scheduled Castes and no one in a position to speak for the Indian States. I observe also that the Leader of the Hindu Mahasabha dissociated himself from the resolution passed by the Conference, while organised parties, such as, the Muslim League, were not represented at its deliberations. I am however, I need not say, at all times glad to hear the views of persons prominent in the public life of this country on the political issue of the day, and to give all attention to any representations that they make to me.

"The specific proposal that you ask me to consider is that permission should be given for certain persons to meet Mr. Gandhi in detention to ascertain his reaction to the events that have happened since his arrest, and to explore with him avenues for reconciliation. You feel, you tell me, that Mr. Gandhi has already expressed between him and me his disapproval of violence and sabotage, and you add that you have no doubt that he will cast his influence on the side of internal harmony and reconciliation. And you urge that if the permission for which you have asked is not given to you, the action of the Government will unquestionably be interpreted as meaning that they do not wish to see reconciliation.

THE AUGUST DISTURBANCES

"Let me remind you first, of the salient facts in the position. Mr. Gandhi and the leaders of the Congress Party, after a long preliminary campaign of incitement were finally placed under restraint last August. At the time when they were placed under restraint, Mr. Gandhi had urged open rebellion, had adjured his followers to 'do or die'; had made it clear that there was 'no room left for withdrawal or negotiation'; and had, both directly and indirectly, by his speeches and writings, contributed actively to foment that sad and disastrous series of events that disfigured the face of India during the autumn and winter of last year. He and the Congress Party had been given every opportunity to reconsider their position. My Government and I had exposed ourselves to the charge that we ought to have taken action against them much earlier and that we ought not to have allowed this campaign of violence and sabotage to develop. But our forbearance met with no reward, and we were left with no option in the interests of the security of India and her defence against Japan and against the other Axis Powers but to take the action that was taken last August.

"Unhappily, the arrest of the leaders did not prevent a shocking campaign of organised violence and crime for which preparations had been made before those arrests took place. The paper published by the Government of India clearly indicates the full responsibility of the Congress and of Mr. Gandhi for that campaign. The encouragement which it gave, while it lasted, to the Axis Powers needs no emphasis. Its effect on the war effort was severe. It resulted in most material damage to communications and to public and private property, and in the murder of many innocent persons, who had no concern with, or interest in, the political issues involved.

"Despite the fact that Mr. Gandhi and the Working Committee have had full access to reliable accounts in the Press since August last, there has never been any condemnation of those activities by them. They have not dissociated themselves from the resolution of last August from which so many of these evils flowed. Mr. Gandhi's advice to 'do or die' still stands on record; and while order has been restored and the rebellion put down, no one can suggest that the country did not pass through a period of grave danger; and that while the Congress creed remains what it is, we would again be exposed to that danger if the Congress and its leaders are again given full liberty of action.

"NO WISH ON MR. GANDHI'S PART TO GO BACK"

"You mention that you have seen the correspondence that has passed between me and Mr. Gandhi. I would draw your attention to one most important point. I put it to Mr. Gandhi, in terms (for I thought that must be his intention) that if I was right in thinking that he wished to go back on the resolution of last August, to condemn what had taken place and to give suitable assurances for the future, I would be very ready to consider the matter further. His reply made it quite clear that I had misunderstood him and that that was not his wish, and matters stand at that point.

"Thereafter, during the time of Mr. Gandhi's fast, there was the fullest opportunity for certain of his trusted friends to make contact with him and many indeed of those who were present at the conference in Bombay had the opportunity of seeing him. Mr. Gandhi, had he so wished, could then, as he could have during the time preceding his fast, or to-day, have repudiated the violence for which Congress was responsible, could have indicated his readiness to resile from the Congress resolution of August last, and could have given assurances for the future. But nothing whatever positive has emerged as a result of those contacts, any more than from the correspondence that passed between Mr. Gandhi and myself, and I have no reason to believe that Mr. Gandhi is any more ready now than he was at an earlier stage to repudiate the policy as the result of which the Congress leaders are at present under detention.

"Now, gentlemen, I have done my very best in the time that I have been in this country to try to improve relations and to try to get the parties together: and I do not think it can be suggested that I have been unsympathetic, or that I have not throughout been genuinely anxious to give all the help I can to the improvement of good relations and to the solution of India's political problems. If, therefore, in the present instance I am unable to accept your proposals, it is not from any lack of anxiety to see the atmosphere improved. But on me there rests a very definite and specific obligation, and the same obligation rests on my Government. It is the duty of both of us to ensure peace and good order in this country: to see that India is defended against Japanese and other Axis aggression; and to make certain that nothing is allowed to happen that would further the interests of the enemy, interfere with the war effort of the United Nations or create internal strife and tumult. So long as that is our obligation, so long as the Congress policy remains what it is, there can be no question of any alteration in our attitude towards the Congress.

"NO SUGGESTION OF CHANGE OF HEART"

"I have already pointed out that neither from Mr. Gandhi nor from the Congress is there, or has there been, any suggestion of a change of mind or heart. They had the opportunity and have the opportunity still to abandon that policy. With every respect for your good intentions and your anxiety to see a happy solution, I cannot agree to give special facilities such as you ask for contact with Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders while conditions remain as I have described them.

"If, on the other hand, Mr. Gandhi is prepared to repudiate in full the Congress resolution of last August, to condemn equally those incitements to violence which are represented by his references to 'open rebellion', his advice to Congress followers to 'do or die', the statement that with the removal of the leaders the rank and the file must judge for themselves and the like; if, in addition, he and the Congress Party are prepared to give assurances acceptable to the Government for the future, the matter can be considered further. But till then, and while the Congress attitude remains unchanged, Government's first duty is to the people of India, and that duty it intends to discharge. It is not to be deflected from that duty by suggestions, ill-founded as I believe them to be, that by doing its duty it will add to bitterness and ill-feeling. I do not believe that to be the case. But

even if it were, that is the price that the Government must pay for discharging its responsibilities to the people of India, and I feel certain myself, that the people of India appreciate fully the dangerous and sinister character of the Congress campaign of last year—from which such great sections of them stood wholly aloof—and the threat which that campaign represented and would represent again if it were revived to the safety and tranquillity of this country.

"ESSENTIAL PRELIMINARY FOR A NATIONAL GOVT."

"I would add only one word more. You speak of the importance of a National Government. I quite agree with you, and my endeavours during the time that I have been here have been devoted to forming at the Centre a Government as representative and as broadly based as can be found, in the present circumstances in India. But the fact that you suggest, that it is only if you are permitted to consult Mr. Gandhi that a genuine National Government can be formed, shows that, so far from realising the true character of a National Government, you contemplate that that Government should be nominated with the approval of a single political leader acting independently of other parties and other leaders in this country. Not on these lines is progress to be made. No National Government can properly be so described unless, as in the United Kingdom, it is fully representative of all parties and sections of the people based on their ready co-operation with the Government and with one another, united in the prosecution of the war for the objectives of the United Nations, of such a character that its establishment soothes instead of aggravating controversy. The essential preliminary to that is that agreement between parties, communities and interests which I have been so anxious to foster, but to which the excessive claims and the totalitarian ambitions of the Congress and its leaders have been so consistent an obstacle in the past."

Leaders Urge Impartial Tribunal

To investigate charges against the Congress

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, Sir Chunilal B. Mehta, Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth and Sir Jagdish Prasad issued a statement from New Delhi on the 22nd. May 1943 urging the appointment of an impartial tribunal to investigate the charges made against Congress Leaders now in detention, or in the alternative, the release of those leaders so as to review the situation and attempt a solution of the present deadlock. The statement runs as follows :

"OUR DEMAND IS FOR JUSTICE"

"His Excellency the Viceroy's recent refusal to permit any non-Congress leaders to interview *Mahatma Gandhi* and the speeches of Mr. Amery in the House of Commons can be reasonably interpreted as indicating that the British Government are resolved to keep *Mahatma Gandhi*, Pandit *Jawaharlal Nehru*, and other prominent leaders of the Congress in detention without trial for the duration of the war. Even more significant is the denial to Mr. Phillips, the Personal Representative of President Roosevelt of an opportunity to see *Mahatma Gandhi*. We, ourselves, have regretted that the Congress should have passed the resolution which it did pass on the 8th of August 1942 at Bombay. We have also condemned the acts of violence and sabotage which took place a few months ago in this country. We wish to place beyond all doubt that we seek no concessions for *Mahatma Gandhi* and his chief associates. We are not petitioners on their behalf for clemency or tenderness. Our demand is for justice, and no more and no less."

"Grave charges have been publicly made against *Mahatma Gandhi* and his colleagues and it has been suggested both in England and in India that the Congress leaders were pro-Japanese. To the best of our knowledge and belief there is no truth in this allegation. *Mahatma Gandhi's* pacifism, known all over the world, should not in our opinion, be interpreted as amounting to his sympathy with Japan or with any of the Axis Powers. The charges brought against *Mahatma Gandhi* are to be found in the published correspondence between the Viceroy and *Mahatma Gandhi* in Government communiques and pamphlets and in the propouncements of the Secretary of State for India. It is somewhat remarkable that these charges have been made at a time when those who could meet them had no opportunity of rebutting them.

"It has been said that nothing was easier for *Mahatma Gandhi* than to repudiate acts of violence or acts of sabotage and to withdraw civil disobedience.

We feel that he has already repudiated the acts of violence, and it is our conviction that so far as he is concerned his adherence to the doctrine of non-violence is as strong to-day as it ever was. For ourselves, we do not believe in civil disobedience either on principle or as a matter of expediency, but we are constrained to observe that matters were allowed to drift after the failure of the Cripps Mission and no attempt was made to avert a crisis by the exercise of imagination and constructive statesmanship.

A BODY OF UNCHALLENGEABLE IMPARTIALITY NEEDED

Taking the situation as it is, we urge that the *ipse dixit* of the Executive Government should not be regarded as sufficient to justify the prolonged detention of the imprisoned leaders without impartial investigation. Let those *ex parte* accusations be investigated by a tribunal of unchallengeable status and impartiality—a tribunal so constituted as to satisfy all reasonable men that it will carry on its investigation without fear or favour and that its decision will in no way be influenced by the published views of the Executive Government. We consider that the setting up of such a tribunal is in the highest interests of the Government itself.

"*Madame Chiang Kai-shek* has recently stated in a public speech, in America that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be set at liberty and that speech was made after the charges against him had been broadcast to the world. Can his continued detention be justified before world opinion if he is denied every opportunity of defending himself?

"If the objection to our demand is that such an investigation into the charges against Mahatma Gandhi and his co-workers is not feasible during the war, we should like to point out that in his letter to Mahatma Gandhi dated February 5, 1943, His Excellency the Viceroy said: 'If we do not act on all this information or make it publicly known it is because the time is not yet ripe; but you may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later and it will then be for you and your colleagues to clear yourselves before the world if you can'. To this Mahatma Gandhi replied in his letter dated February 7, 1943: 'You say that the time is not yet ripe to publish the charges against the Congress. Have you ever thought of the possibility of their being found baseless when they are put before an impartial tribunal or that some of the condemned persons might have died in the meanwhile or that some of the evidence that the living can produce might become unavailable?' It is clear, therefore, that so far back as the 5th of February, 1943 the possibility of these leaders having to clear themselves before the world was considered and maintained by His Excellency the Viceroy himself. We cannot see, therefore, any valid reason why that possibility should not be translated into a fact at this stage.

GOVT. MUST SEEK MORAL BASIS FOR ITS ACTIONS

To the objection that the setting up of a Tribunal will lead to public excitement our reply is that the continued detention of these leaders had already caused and is causing grave dissatisfaction and a keen sense of injustice in the public mind. If Mahatma Gandhi and his colleagues are not allowed to meet the charges against them until after the war and are to be kept in prison till then the plain implication of this is that some of the most prominent Indian leaders will be kept in jail without trial for, may be, five years and some of them may even die during this long interval. Mr. Amery's tauntingly provocative description of such detention as 'inocuous isolation' has only increased public resentment. The Government may think that they are strong enough to ignore all such feelings and that they are the sole judges as to when and whom to arrest and detain without trial for an unlimited period. Whatever may be said of such action on the part of a Government of the people, the same cannot apply to a Government carried on by an irremovable Executive irresponsible to the people of this country or to its legislature and in which the key positions are still in British hands. Whatever the legal position, the Government of India must, in the circumstances, seek a moral basis for its actions, and it is with that object in view that we suggest an investigation by an impartial tribunal.

CONTINUANCE OF STATUS QUO BODES ILL

"We should, in conclusion, like to point out that the Defence of India Act Rule, under which Mahatma Gandhi and his colleagues were arrested was pronounced last month by the Federal Court in an authoritative decision to be invalid. Instead of availing themselves of the opportunity to restore those men to freedom under the sanction of a decision by the highest judicial authority in India, we

regret that the Government of India have tried to legalise their action by a validating ordinance. No well-wisher of the country can contemplate, without grave concern, a continuance of the present state of things, which forebodes ill for the mutual relations between India and Britain. The sense of frustration is now deeper, if less vociferous."

"We sincerely hope that our suggestion that the imprisoned leaders may be given a chance of clearing themselves may be accepted. If Government, for any reason, are not prepared to set up an impartial tribunal, then justice, no less than expediency, demand that Mahatma Gandhi and his colleagues should be set at liberty so that they may apply themselves, as free men, as we expect that they will, to a review of the situation and to the solution of the present deadlock in consultation and co-operation with other important parties.

Gandhi wishes to see Jinnah

Government Turn Down Request

On the 26th. May the Government of India received a request from Mr. Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Mr. Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him, said a communique issued from New Delhi, which added :

"In accordance with their known policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr. Gandhi, the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed and thus gravely embarrassing India's war effort at a critical time. It rests with Mr. Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country and until he does so the disabilities from which he suffers are of his own choice."

MR. JINNAH'S SPEECH RECALLED

In connection with Gandhiji's letter, political observers recall the words which Mr. Jinnah used in the course of his presidential address to the annual session of the Muslim League at Delhi last month.

Mr. Jinnah had said : "Nobody would welcome it more than myself if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Let me tell you that it will be the greatest day both for the Hindus and Mussalmans. If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me ? He is writing letters to the Viceroy. Why does he not write to me direct ? Who is there that can prevent him from doing so ? I cannot believe for a single moment—strong as this Government may be in this country—you may say anything you like against this Government—I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter, if it is sent to me. It will be a very serious thing, indeed, if such a thing is done by the Government. But I do not see evidence of any kind of change of policy on the part of Mr. Gandhi or Congress or the Hindu leadership."

Mr. Jinnah's comment on Govt. communique

"This letter of Mr. Gandhi can only be construed as a move on his part to embroil the Muslim League to come into clash with the British Government solely for the purpose of helping his release so that he would be free to do what he pleases thereafter," said Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League in a statement issued on the 28th. May commenting on the Delhi communique. Mr. Jinnah adds :

"There is really no change of policy on the part of Mr. Gandhi and no genuine desire to meet the suggestion that I made in my speech during the sessions of the All-India Muslim League at Delhi. Although I have always been ready and willing to meet Mr. Gandhi or any other Hindu leader and shall be still glad to meet him, yet merely expressing his desire to meet me is not the kind of ephemeral letter that I suggested in my speech that Mr. Gandhi should write, and which has been now stopped by the Government. I have received a communication from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated May 24 that Mr. Gandhi's letter merely expresses a wish to meet me and this letter, the Government have decided, cannot be forwarded to me.

"My speech was directed to meet the appeals that were made to me and are now being made by Hindu leaders, that the Muslim League should do something

towards the solution of the deadlock and my suggestions about the kind of letter that Mr. *Gandhi* should write, were in response to those appeals, when I said that I myself saw no change of heart. There was no evidence of any change of policy on the part of Mr. *Gandhi* or Hindu leadership and I referred to the recent correspondence that had passed between Mr. *Gandhi* and the Viceroy, which on the contrary showed that Mr. *Gandhi* fully maintained his stand of the 8th of August, 1942. But nevertheless some of the responsible Hindu leaders pressed upon me that Mr. *Gandhi* has now realised that he has made a mistake and that he would be prepared to reconsider and retrace his steps if he were given an opportunity to do so and that he has changed his attitude towards Pakistan and would be willing to come to a settlement on the basis of Pakistan, but the British Government are preventing a Hindu-Muslim settlement by refusing people of position and standing permission to establish contact with him for this purpose. I therefore, suggested that, if Mr. *Gandhi* were to write to me a letter indicating that he was prepared to retrace his steps and abandon his policy and programme culminating in the resolution of the A. I. C. C. of the 8th August, and was even now willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan, we were willing to bury the past and forget it. I still believe that the Government will not dare to stop such a letter if it came from Mr. *Gandhi*."

"I regret that the Congress press as usual is indulging in cheap gibes and slogans based on the publication of isolated passages from my speech and even those are mutilated and important words are eliminated from them. This may serve as misleading and inimical propaganda but is not calculated to create the friendly atmosphere which is essential. In my opinion, the Press and those who are indulging in various thoughtless statements are doing great disservice."

Mr. Jinnah's Statement on letter Reiterated

The position he had taken up following the refusal of the Government of India to forward to him Mr. *Gandhi's* letter was referred to at a press conference at Karachi on the 4th. June 1943 by Mr. *Jinnah*.

Mr. *Jinnah* said that, ever since the Congress resolution of 8th August last, he had repeatedly stated that the Congress decision was not a rebellion against the British Government only, but an internecine war, a declaration of war against the Muslim League and Muslim India, and that unless the Congress dropped its pistol, there was no chance of a settlement. "What is the Congress resolution of 8th August?" asked Mr. *Jinnah*, and said, "It lays down a demand for immediate Independence, that a National Provisional Government should be set up and a Federal All-India Constitution should be framed, that the British Government should quit India and the National Government would frame the constitution; and that if the demand was not conceded, civil disobedience was to be launched. If such a demand was accepted, it would be deceptive of the Muslim demand for Pakistan." Reading passages from his address before the Muslim League in April, Mr. *Jinnah* maintained that the letter sent by Mr. *Gandhi* was not the kind of letter he had envisaged when he had stated that the Government would not have "the daring to stop such a letter" and that the position would be very serious indeed if they did so. Mr. *Jinnah* complained that his April speech had been twisted so completely by a section of the Press and by some statements issued thereafter as to make one feel that "the organised Hindu press will not give a fair chance or a fair deal to any one who does not surrender completely to the wishes of the Congress and of Mr. *Gandhi*" "If you want to black it out, you may do so," said Mr. *Jinnah*, "but my position is as clear as daylight."

At least two Hindu, continued Mr. *Jinnah*, had the frankness to appreciate his point of view. They were Mr. P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the All-India Communist Party, who had pointed out that Mr. *Gandhi's* letter had left a loophole by not indicating whether he was going to meet the Muslim League point of view, and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari who, in his recent statement, had conceded that his (Mr. *Jinnah's*) offer had not been accepted and therefore ordinarily it would lapse—although with due respect to Mr. Rajagopalachari, Mr. *Jinnah* did not see the distinction the letter had drawn between national and other affairs.

Replying to a questioner who suggested that Mr. *Jinnah* could not have known the full contents of Mr. *Gandhi's* letter, Mr. *Jinnah* said that apparently Mr. *Gandhi* had merely expressed a desire to meet him and nothing more. "At present, I have no reason to doubt this information," said Mr. *Jinnah*.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce

Sixteenth-Session—New Delhi—27th. and 28th. March 1943

Presidential Address

The sixteenth annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry commenced at New Delhi on the 27th. March 1943, with Mr. G. L. Mehta, President, in the chair. Those present included Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Tushar Kanti Ghosh, Sir Jeremy Raisman, Sir Edward Benthall, Sir Jogendra Singh, Sir J. P. Srivastava, Dr. Ambedkar, Mr. C. E. Jones, Mr. N. R. Pillai, Mr. T. S. Pillay and Sir Theodore Gregory.

"We must realise that a fundamental of economic progress is the condition of the mass of people," observed Mr. G. L. Mehta in his presidential speech. "Industrial expansion must," said Mr. Mehta, "be broadbased on the consuming capacity of the people and at the root of economic discontent are dire poverty, gross disparity in wealth and income, absence of security and the want of equality of opportunity. Unless a social system and an economic order can cure those evils and satisfy the elementary needs of men, it cannot long survive. Crores are being spent to-day on death and destruction, why are they not spent on life and on improving the living standard of the starving and underfed, ill-clothed and ill-housed humanity? It is not a problem but an obligation to solve the economic maladies from which our country suffers." Mr. Mehta dealt with several important economic, financial and commercial questions which have been under the consideration of the Federation and the Indian commercial world during the year, and said that what they needed was to have a National Government at the Centre backed by public opinion which could pool its full weight in imperial and international counsels and adequately represent Indian feelings and interests at the Peace Conference.

Referring to the political background and the Cripps' negotiations, Mr. Mehta stated that the principal reason of the deadlock was the reluctance of the British Government to transfer effective power to Indian hands, but given the good-will, trust and desire to achieve reconciliation, the question was capable of satisfactory solution. Even in the scheme of expansion of Executive Council, which was not at all adequate, the policy of distrust of India was evident. Mr. Mehta criticised strongly the appointment of a representative of the non-official British community as a member of the Council as being tantamount to recognition of the British community in India as a minority entitled to a separate seat. He dealt with the persistent endeavours being made by British commercial interests in India and in England to reverse the principle enunciated by Sir Stafford Cripps, that there would be no special protection for British capital or commercial interests in India, and said that there should be no limitations or restrictions on the powers and rights of the future Government of India to formulate and pursue measures and policies considered necessary for safeguarding Indian interests. "Without the substance of economic and financial independence political freedom is a shadow."

Referring to the question of post-war reconstruction, Mr. Mehta said: "India, along with other Asiatic countries, is not prepared to continue being regarded in terms of markets and concessions or as a source of raw materials and cheap labour." Powerful countries adopt the creed of economic internationalism when it suits their interest but resort to nationalism when convenient. The irony of it is that while preaching virtues of internationalism to backward countries and inducing or compelling them to adopt it, they themselves practise nationalism. Moreover, international standards which might be set up by highly industrialised countries for the reconstruction of the post-war world would not necessarily be suitable or beneficial to countries like India which will have a vast scope for industrial and economic development. The criterion of international trade as a measure of economic betterment has its limitations and the maintenance of internal stability and of domestic equilibrium is no less fundamental to the economic progress of a country than preservation of international trade." While welcoming the principle of a direct agreement with the U. S. A. in respect of lease-lend, Mr. Mehta deplored the absence of adequate data regarding lease-lend or reciprocal aid despite request of Indian commercial bodies. "In deciding the question of reciprocal lease-lend, it is essential to bear in mind that supplies to India have been made not merely with a view to overcome the deficiencies of India's defence but also to

strengthen the forces of the United Nations and use India as a base of operations. It is necessary for Indian opinion to see that the liabilities of India are not unduly widened by making India responsible for all lease-lend aid received for Burma-Malaya on Middle East campaigns. Reciprocal supplies and services provided by India in the interests of common defence should be impartially assured. The authorities should make ample reservation in concluding a direct agreement so as to safeguard India's fiscal autonomy. At the present stage of India's economic and industrial development as well as constitutional subordination, the Government should not make any commitments which might affect the financial, commercial and fiscal policies of India in the post-war period. It is not a question of India remaining isolated from any scheme of international economic reconstruction but one of safeguarding her vital interests and of co-ordinating them in any plan of common benefits".

Dealing with the principle of equality of sacrifice, between several members of the United Nations, Mr. Mehta said "that equality of sacrifice cannot be demanded without an equality of status. We are asked to pay the piper but nowhere are we allowed to call the tune. Equality of sacrifice is proportionate to the capacity to pay and the ability to bear the burden. Incidentally, the benefits which would accrue as a result of this sacrifice should also in equity be taken into account. The national contribution of India must be set in relation to her national wealth and income as compared to the other members of the United Nations. A very large portion of India's national income consists of goods and services which are necessary for bare subsistence and do not provide a source of strength for any other purpose. On the other hand, any impartial examination of this question should also take into account factors which constitute India's concealed sacrifice and contribution to the war such as the utilisation of sterling balances in England at a nominal rate of interest to finance Britain's war efforts as well as the purchase of commodities in India at controlled prices."

Dealing with the question of defence expenditure, Mr. Mehta said, "the people of India do not desire to shirk the duty of defending their country or of sharing on equal and equitable basis the cost of such defence. Apart from the fact that the representatives of the Indian people have no control over the defence policy or over the armed forces which operate on behalf of India and no say in the foreign policy of the British Common-wealth, it need hardly be proved that the capacity of India to bear the burdens of war is strictly limited. It is also indisputable that an army in India has wider purposes than mere defence of India and is maintained to subserve imperial interests. The terms of the financial settlement are not free from ambiguity and the whole question depends upon their interpretation and application. India has to bear the burdens, obligations and responsibilities of a member of the British Empire and the United Nations while being denied the rights and powers of a self-governing country."

Referring to the question of utilisation of India's growing sterling balance, Mr. Mehta observed that India is not in a position either to determine the terms of payment or to safeguard her assets. The Government of India hold the view that this is mainly a post-war problem. But this assumption cannot be accepted because the question is of urgent importance. He emphasised the necessity of utilising the sterling assets for constructive and beneficent purposes during the war and for safeguarding its value and convertibility. Dominions have not postponed this question but have taken care to see that their immediate requirements are met and their vital interests adequately safeguarded in transactions relating to sterling by obtaining gold as well as transfer of British assets. Mr. Mehta criticised the constitution of the post-war Reconstruction Fund which would tend to restrict and delimit India's purchasing power outside the U. K. India should not only have the choice but also have the wherewithal to make her purchase of her capital goods in the cheapest and best markets of the world. The Government should not make any post-war commitments about India's sterling resources which would sterilise our sterling balances for purchases exclusively from the U. K. The Government have hitherto failed to take advantage of India's position as a creditor, in order to strengthen her financial structure and economic position. The problem of sterling securities originates in the Government of India having allowed foreign countries to make payments to us in sterling instead of gold securities or in our own currency. If borrowing is to be the Government's sheet-anchor during the period of emergency, the ballast that the ship of the State needs is the trust and goodwill of the people."

Coming to industrial development, Mr. Mehta said, "the war has revealed the

serious gaps in India's industrial structure and her dependence of imports of plant, etc., which have tended to limit the scope and pace of industrial advance and are likely to affect adversely the post-war competitive power of our industries. The absence of basic machine-making industries handicaps other industries. Several mineral products of India are being almost entirely exported in an unmanufactured state to foreign countries for years at comparatively low prices. If these mineral resources are not developed within the country, it is quite conceivable that they would be pooled and distributed among the industrially developed countries of the world after the war on some international plan of allocation of raw materials and minerals. While the United States are building four ships in a day, we have not built one single merchant vessel during the last four years of war. Similar unhelpful attitude was adopted in regard to the automobile industry. What weights with the authorities here and in England is not India's economic interests nor Britain's dire needs but the post-war effects of Indian industrial development on British manufactures and exports. The American Technical Mission which aroused great expectations does not seem to have led to any appreciable results."

Referring to the transport system of the country, Mr. Mehta said, "that although an integrated and co-ordinated transport policy for full and effective utilisation of all means of communications is essential for the economic development of the country, shipping, both coastal and inland as well as roads have in the past been neglected owing to bias for railways in transport policy. Nor were any efforts made during the 21 years which intervened between the last war and the present one to establish locomotive, ship-building and automobile industries in the country. The principal cause of the strain on the railways can be traced to the neglect to maintain efficiency of rolling stock in the years before the war. During the 18 years the number of locomotives has declined annually. We have to depend for our railway equipment on other countries and have been obliged to part with locomotives, wagons and rails from our own slender supplies. If the Indian shipping industry had been encouraged by the Government many of the difficulties experienced in regard to maritime trade and internal transport could have been mitigated."

Mr. Mehta, in his concluding remarks, stressed that industrial development was, after all, a part of wider economic problem of the country and dwelt on the fundamental importance of agriculture and cottage industries. "No one who desires to see India economically powerful should discount the imperative need of a positive and constructive social policy. We have to see that in our industrial organisations efficiency of work is reconciled with security for the worker, that the desire for social betterment exists along with satisfaction of immediate social needs, that individual initiative fosters economic progress." He said that in the task of economic and social reconstruction, the Federation would have an important and constructive contribution to make, and that it should strive to be the economic front of a healthy and broad-based nationalism.

Proceedings and Resolutions

TRANSFER OF POWER ESSENTIAL

The Federation then passed three resolutions put from the Chair on the political situation, India's participation in international conferences and the sale of Indian silver in England.

The first resolution expressed grave concern with the political situation in the country and reiterated the Federation's demand for the immediate and effective transfer of political power to a National Government. The meeting urged the following steps: (1) an immediate declaration of Government's readiness to transfer effective political power to the people of this country, (2) release of political leaders unconditionally to enable them to review the political situation with a view to the establishment of a National Government in conjunction with other political parties,

INDIA AND POST-WAR CONFERENCE

The second resolution urged the Government of India, as at present constituted, to desist from entering into any agreement on behalf of India which involved acceptance of financial, fiscal or economic principles or policies as basis for post-war reconstruction and would commit the future Government in India in that respect. The Federation demanded that in any international conferences which are convened for arriving at such arrangement or agreement for common objects, delegates should consist wholly of representative Indians including representatives of the Indian commercial community and should in every instance be responsible to Indian public opinion and not function as nominees of His Majesty's Government,

SILVER SALES

The Federation strongly disapproved of the policy pursued by the Government of India in selling the accumulated stocks of Indian silver in the London market at a low price, which compared unfavourably with the price paid by the U. S. A. to Mexican sellers. It urged that with a view to conserving the bullion reserves, which were already comparatively slender, they should immediately stop the sales of Indian silver in London and in case of imperative necessity should sell it in India and fix the price of silver in consonance with the price obtaining in other silver markets.

The Federation adopted five more resolutions and was discussing the ninth when the session adjourned till the next day.

The resolutions discussed and adopted related *inter alia* to the allocation of defence expenditure, utilisation and safeguarding of Indian sterling balances.

ALLOCATION OF DEFENCE EXPENDITURE

The resolution relating to allocation of defence expenditure urged that India should be asked to bear only such expenditure as was undertaken strictly for her own defence purposes and that the "terms of settlement should not be widened to include items of expenditure under India's war measures which cannot equitably and legitimately be debitable to India." The Federation was opposed to the allocation of capital and recurring cost of air forces expansion on fifty-fifty basis.

The Federation asserted that "so long as the control of policy with regard to defence expenditure remained with an Executive not responsible to the Central Legislature, the public would not be satisfied with the mere assurance of the Finance Member that the allocation of war expenditure is open to audit and scrutiny on behalf of the Central Legislature and to investigation by its Public Accounts Committee. The resolution demanded the immediate publication by the Government of figures of all purchases made in this country by His Majesty's Government and other Allied Governments at controlled prices and the services rendered at concessions rates, in order to enable a proper assessment of this country's contribution to the Allied war effort and particularly to ascertain the magnitude of the invisible advantages accruing to His Majesty's Government and other Allied Governments out of such purchases.

The resolution was moved by Mr. *Devi Prasad Khaitan*, and supported by *Messrs. A. D. Shroff* and *A. R. Bhatt*.

Mr. *Khaitan* complained that India had been obstructed in the past in her industrial development, otherwise she would have been in a much better position to render assistance in the war effort. Referring to allocation of defence expenditure, Mr. *Khaitan* claimed that the Government could secure India's full assistance if they associated responsible Indians, who understood the subject, with the scrutiny of war expenditure.

UTILISATION OF STERLING BALANCES

Sir Chunilal B. Mehta moved the resolution relating to utilisation and safeguarding of Indian sterling balances. The resolution expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which the whole question of utilisation and safeguarding of India's growing sterling balances was being dealt with by the Government of India. The Federation demanded that sterling balances should be utilised to repatriate British commercial investments in India and "with regard to the balance of sterling credits the Government of India should secure an undertaking from the British Government that in case the value of the sterling during or after the war depreciates in terms of gold, the British Government shall compensate the Reserve Bank of India for all its sterling holding to the extent of such depreciation."

Sir Chunilal said that repatriation undertaken so far had not resulted in any deflation of currency in this country and the Finance Member had made not a reference to their demand for liquidating British interests in India by utilising the sterling balances. He claimed that theirs was not a political demand, but was based on justice and fair-play.

Sir Padampat Singhania and Mr. *B. M. Bhat* supported the resolution. *Sir Padampat* claimed that the Finance Member was not right when he said that India's sterling balances were growing because of Britain's free gift to India. He asserted that the balances represented a mere fringe of what India was actually contributing to war effort. India's roads and railways, for instance, were being used to capacity, and it would require a big replacement fund to put them in shape after the war.

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

The resolution on post-war reconstruction emphasised that international plans and standards set up by highly industrialised countries for economic reconstruction would not be necessarily beneficial to India without important qualifications and reservations owing to the radically different conditions in which India is placed. In connection with schemes and proposals for the international regulation and distribution of raw materials of the world, the Federation made it clear that the producing country will have a prior claim on its products and it will be entirely free to determine the quantum of production of its own raw materials according to its own economic needs and requirements. "India will insist on claiming the right and liberty to utilise her own raw materials in the first instance, and no extraneous influence should be permitted to impede the country's normal economic development to the detriment of her agriculture and industry".

The Federation also emphasised that India should have full autonomy to determine her post-war economic policy, primarily in accordance with her own national interest and to collaborate with other countries on suitable terms so as not to injure her own interests.

Sir *Sri Ram*, moving the resolution, thought it was really inappropriate in a country like ours to speak of post-war reconstruction, because we had not really had any construction so far regarding our economy. He dwelt on a number of aspects of reconstruction in India of industry and agriculture and deprecated the "officially inspired rift" between the two. "We for our part", he said, "are quite willing and anxious to play our part in assisting in the task of world reconstruction but it is imperative that India's authentic voice should be heard at the Peace Conference and her leaders of commerce and industry and agriculture be given their proper place at the discussions regarding post-war reconstruction". He appealed for mutual help and patronage between farmers, manufacturers, bankers, insurance companies and men of science in a sound and speedy development of our economic standards.

Mr. *T. T. Krishnamachari* (South India Chamber) emphasised that without a change in our Government during the course of the war it would be impossible for us to resist the economic pressure enveloping us day after day. He also laid stress on the sociological aspect of the reconstruction problem and declared that Indian industry should adopt a policy of controlled self-interest. He sharply criticised the textile industry for the 400 per cent increase in the price of the poor man's cloth and for the increase in yarn prices, which was likely to throw the handloom weaver in the south out of his employment. He suspected that the recent interest in the Indian agriculturist shown by the European Group in the Assembly was a symptom of a move to get a grip on Indian agriculture similar to the grip already established on Indian industry.

FOOD SUPPLY

The resolution on food supply expressed anxiety at the present position regarding supply of foodstuffs, and declared that in order to ameliorate the serious situation with regard to supply of foodgrains, firstly all exports of foodgrains from the country should be entirely stopped; secondly, exports of essential foodgrains from the surplus provinces to the deficit ones should be facilitated, so that an equitable distribution of foodgrains in the country as a whole may be brought about; thirdly, the controlled prices should be fixed at a level which would bring out supplies; and fourthly, transport facilities should be arranged for the movement of essential foodgrains within the country. The resolution also urged that the distribution of foodgrains under control should be effected as far as possible only through the normal channels of trade.

Major-General E. Wood, Additional Secretary, Supply Department, who came by invitation, explained the food position and the steps the Government of India had planned to secure a uniform supply of foodgrains in the country throughout the year.

The resolution was proposed by Mr. *Haridas Madhabdas* and seconded by Mr. *J. C. Setalvad*.

Sir *Purshotamdas Thakurdas* said that as pointed out by General Wood, the Government of India were responsible for the Central Purchasing Scheme and transport of grains from surplus to deficit provinces. The main complaint in the country was against the system of distribution. He agreed with General Wood that ladies in Bombay were rendering very valuable services, but even these ladies complained that supplies had run out. Referring to the demand for the main-

tenance of the existing channels of trade, Sir Purshotamdas said that that should be taken to mean that "our interests should be safe or were safe." The trade, he said, was prepared to stand out if the Government wanted to make its own arrangements. The greater question was to make available foodgrains to everyone according to his needs. He insisted that everyone would not only get according to his needs but everyone should also get grains of the highest quality to which the people were accustomed. If the Government undertook the Central purchasing scheme they should also guarantee the requisite quality of foodgrains. "Proper quality of foodgrains would make the Food Department tolerable." Sir Purshotamdas was prepared to concede that people outside, who depended on India for their foodgrains, should be given their supplies, but such exports should be made good by His Majesty's Government from other sources and such replenishments to India should be given as high a priority as the exports from India were given.

Sir Purshotamdas stressed the need for a National Government even during the war and pointed out that a responsible Minister at the Centre would be able to understand the problem in its proper perspective.

Resolutions—Second Day—New Delhi—28th. March 1943

The Federation discussed to-day, among other questions, Lease-Lend supplies and the activities of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation.

The resolution on food supply discussed yesterday was passed this morning with one dissentient, Mr. *Narsing Rao* of the Andhra Chamber of Commerce, who took exception particularly to the demand made in it that controlled prices should be fixed at a level which would bring out supplies. He asked that the price should be fixed at a level which the wage-earner could afford and which would give the grower a reasonable profit. Mr. *Narsing Rao* also urged that requisitioning should be adopted in order to make the hoarder unhoard stocks and as a necessary preliminary to the introduction of rationing. Because of the omission of these points from the resolution he opposed it.

LEASE-LEND SUPPLIES

Mr. *A. D. Shroff*, Bombay, moved the resolution on Lease-Lend supplies. The resolution while appreciating the help extended by the U. S. A. for the defence of India under the Lease Lend procedure declared its belief that the terms of repayment of the aid received should be such that firstly India's reciprocal contribution should in no case exceed the extent of the aid in materials received for the purpose of her own actual defence requirements, and secondly that all reciprocal services, facilities and supplies given by India to the U. S. A. should be fully taken into account while making the final adjustments under Lease-Lend. The resolution further pointed out that Lease-Lend repayment was closely linked up with the wider questions of post-war planning in the sphere of international trade which were dealt with in the Atlantic Charter as well as in the Anglo-American Agreement of February 1942, and particularly in Article VII dealing with mutual reduction in tariff barriers in order to ensure freer international trade. The Federation was strongly of opinion that the Government of India should not enter into such international agreements without specific reservation so as to ensure India's fiscal autonomy and industrial development. The Federation also emphatically urged that in view of the far-reaching applications of any settlement regarding Lease-Lend supplies no final decision should be taken without fully consulting the Indian commercial community.

Mr. *Shroff* after referring to the complex character of the Lease-Lend apparatus, dealt with the possible manner of the settlement of Lease-Lend Account after the war. He said that although President Roosevelt might feel that the recipients of Lease-Lend aid should be let off in view of the help they gave in the war, American public opinion might not be completely reconciled to that view and would certainly demand repayment, if not in material, then in the shape of a very important say in determining the shape of economic affairs after the war. An indication of this was found in the article of the Atlantic Charter which pleaded for a reduction of tariff barriers and for plans for international distribution of raw materials. He urged that India would have to take care to see that in any pool that might be formed of raw materials available in the world, India was not merely treated as a supplier of raw materials but that her raw materials were in the first place reserved for exploitation by Indians and that the balance might be made available to different countries on terms which would not harm our own economy.

Mr. *J. K. Mitter* (Bengal National Chamber of Commerce) seconded the

resolution. He urged that President Roosevelt's principle that a country's obligation should be limited to its capacity should be applied in the case of India and she should not be made to pay for all the Lease-Lend supplies received for campaigns in the Far East and the Middle East, merely because in a global war those operations might be easily connected with the defence of India. It was equally important that an accurate estimate of all the goods and services given by India in terms of the reciprocal aid should be made so that Indian public might be in a position to assess the true position.

Mr. Harishankar Bagla (Cawnpore) supported the resolution, which was passed.

BURMA INDIANS

A resolution on the position of Indians in Burma was moved by *Kumararaja Sir Muthiah Chettiar*, seconded by Mr. S. M. Nauman and Rai Bahadur Virjeebhai Dayabhai and Mr. G. M. Kapadia, both from Burma, and passed.

The resolution urged the Government of India to see that the status, position and rights of Indians in Burma of the future were the same as hitherto, and asked that plans for reconstruction of Burma, now under enemy occupation, should be undertaken in close consultation and agreement with the Government of India who in turn should be guided by Indian public and commercial opinion. The Federation deplored the delay in the settlement of claims of Indian merchants in Burma under the Burma War Risks' Insurance Scheme and in respect of goods supplied to or requisitioned by the Burma Government and requested the Government of India to press upon the Burma Government the imperative necessity of arranging an early settlement of those claims. The Federation emphasised the need for paying adequate compensation to Indian nationals for the losses sustained by them by the application of the Scorched Earth policy or as a result of enemy action or war operations. The Federation also stressed the need for giving allowance to evacuees more generously, promptly and regularly until the end of the war as well as providing employment for such of them as were in need of it and urged that facilities be given to Indian merchants who had business connections in Burma to carry on business in India.

INDIAN INDUSTRIES AND POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT

The meeting adopted a resolution strongly urging the Government to set apart, out of stocks and imports of industrial raw materials under their control, an adequate percentage of such materials so as to prevent the closure of factories in India and enable them to cater to the civil needs. The resolution drew attention to the serious inconvenience caused to business firms and consumers owing to their decision to release only a very small percentage of the production for civilian consumption of such commodities as paper, cement, iron and steel, etc. It declared that the question of industrial development and particularly of safeguarding Indian industries established or expanded during the war from any external competition or any slump in the post-war period should receive the active consideration of the Government of India from now onwards in close collaboration with Indian industrial interests. The resolution urged that the Government's taxation policy should take into account the difficulties which would confront industries in this country after the war, especially owing to the need for replacement and the high cost of materials, plant, machinery etc. for which industries should be allowed to make provision from now and to build up adequate reserves.

The resolution was moved by Sir Padampat Singhania and supported by Sardar P. S. Sodhbans, Mr. D. N. Sen and others.

BRITISH INTERESTS' MOVE TO SECURE SAFEGUARDS

On the subject of safeguards for British commercial interests in India, the meeting passed a resolution *inter alia* welcoming the statements made on behalf of the British Government by the Secretary and the Under-Secretary of State for India that "a guarantee of special protection for British commercial interests in India would not be a condition for the acceptance of whatever constitution Indians might evolve." The Federation viewed with grave apprehension the persistent attempts which were now being made by British commercial interests both in India and in England, to see that the principle and policy underlying that assurance and a similar assurance by Sir Stafford Cripps during his visit to India were undermined and to secure constitutional safeguards and special protection for them even in the future constitution of India and to make this demand a condition precedent for the recognition of India's sovereignty. The Federation made it clear that the Indian commercial community was strongly opposed to such an

inequitable demand which would be derogatory to the full sovereign authority of the future Government of India and which might also militate against the economic expansion of India including the growth of industries owned, controlled and managed by Indians. The Federation declared that safeguards, which they had always condemned as inconsistent with India's rights and interests, should not find a place in the future constitution of India. The Federation affirmed that there should be no diminution of or restriction on the rights and powers of the future Government of India for pursuing any policy or adopting any measure they considered necessary for protecting and promoting the interests of India and Indians.

Moving the resolution, Sir *Purushotamdas Thakurdas* (East India Cotton Association, Bombay), took strong exception to the demand for safeguards by the British commercial interests in India and said that the representation of the European community in the Viceroy's expanded Council, which was neither asked for nor dreamt of, was a signal of Whitehall's intentions. He regarded this representation as a retrograde step and a cruel joke when the demand was for Indianisation and said that its full implication ought to be realised and an emphatic protest lodged against it. It was a question of principle and not of personalities. He asked what chances there were for future planning of Industry according to the wishes of the Federation, when in the Executive Council there was a representative of the antagonistic interests. He said that the committee should follow up the resolution till the injustice was removed.

The resolution was seconded by Sir *Baltridas Goenka*. Sir *P. Singhania*, Sir *Rahimtoola Chinoy*, Mr. *Satyapal Virmani* and Sir *A. H. Ghaznavi* supported it. The last named declared that India would not accept any constitution in which any discriminatory clause existed.

ACTIVITIES OF THE U. K. C. C.

A resolution on the activities of the U. K. C. C. declared that this powerful and influential organisation enjoying several concessions and facilities in this country, is seriously prejudicial to the interests of Indian exporters and merchants and would also be highly detrimental to Indian interests in the post-war period. The Federation has to point out that this body has not only intervened in the normal channels of trade and adversely affected established exporters, but is also depriving Indian mercantile interests of the opportunity of maintaining contacts in foreign markets and the Indian Exchequer of its legitimate earnings."

The Federation strongly protested against the attempt being made in other parts of the British Empire to set up similar organisations, such as the Utility Textile Importing Corporation of East Africa and the Colonial Commercial Corporation of Ceylon, designed to control and canalise import and export trade with India in the hands of monopolistic trade organisations, thus eliminating Indian merchants from established trade built by them after years of effort, enterprise and risk and earnestly requested the Government to take all available steps in their power to see that Indian interests were not jeopardised or sacrificed through the establishment or operation of such organisations. The Federation expressed the opinion that, if on account of abnormal circumstances created by the war, normal channels of trade with certain countries could not function for export trade, the Government of India should take steps to set up an Indian agency for the purpose of handling the export trade from India to these countries so as to retain all the benefits of trade and trade contacts with these countries in Indian hands.

Sir *A. H. Ghaznavi*, moving the resolution, asked: "If they want our help in war effort, did it not strike them to take at least one or two Indian magnates into the partnership of this U. K. C. C.?" Criticising the activities of this body, Sir *Abdul Halim* declared that it refused to purchase from Indians even if the price was cheaper. He gave a number of instances in support of his statement. Every article in which India was trading as importer or exporter, he asserted, had gone out of Indian hands completely and the U. K. C. C. had stepped in. Nothing could be sent out of India, except through this body. He gave the example of sugar, which the U. K. C. C. was selling in Iraq and Iran at Rs. 37 a maund according to report.

Mr. *M. C. Mehta*, Sugar Controller, who was present, intervening, stated that not a single ounce of Indian sugar was sold to the U. K. C. C.

Sir *Abdul Halim* asserted that sugar might not have been sold to the U. K. C. C. directly, but it had to be sold to them because Indian traders themselves

could not ship it to Iraq or Iran. He gave an instance in which a trader tried to get a permit from the Commerce Department for shipping a consignment of sugar, but could not get it and had ultimately to sell the whole consignment to the U. K. C. O.

Mr. Sankalchand Shah and Lala Wazir Chand Seth supported the resolution, which was passed.

MILL-OWNERS AND STANDARD CLOTH SCHEME

Defending the textile industry against remarks of Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari yesterday, Sir Shri Ram, during the discussion on the annual report pointed out that when the Commerce Department eighteen months ago asked the representatives of the textile industry to supply standard cloth, without any dissentient voice the industry offered to supply as much standard cloth as the Government would require. They also expressed readiness to supply huge quantities to the military. They went so far as to suggest that they would be satisfied with no profit or a very small margin of profit so far as the supply of this cloth to their countrymen was concerned. It was not the fault of the textile industry, he asserted, if the Government of India did not move in the matter. Again, at a later conference, the industry took the same position and expressed the wish that this cloth should reach the needy and poor and for that purpose, they offered their services for distribution even in towns with a population of 5,000 people. He did not think that under those circumstances, the industry could be charged with exploiting the poor.

According to him, the difficulty arose from an acute shortage of cloth, as there was at present no more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the normal cloth available for civil requirement. All knew that the mills in Ahmedabad and other places had closed for political reasons for about three months. The millowners had no hand in that situation. Further, the industry's repeated advice to the Supply Department to give up the use of cotton cloth and cotton yarn where it could be replaced by other fabrics or material, had not had much effect. The present high prices, he said, were due to the action of the law of supply and demand. He feared that even if the millowners sold their cloth at cheaper rates, the position was such that there was no guarantee that it would reach the consumer at lower prices. As for the industry, he said, everybody might rest assured that it was producing as much as it could.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS

The following were elected members of the committee for the coming year :

Kumararaja Sir Muthia Chettiar (President); Mr. J. C. Setalvad, Vice-President; Sir Chunilal B. Mehta, Treasurer; Lala Karamchand Thappar, (sugar mills), Mr. J. C. Setalvad, (Insurance), Mr. M. A. Master, (Transport), Mr. Deviprasad Khaitan, Mr. Satya Paul Birman and Mr. M. A. Ispahani.

The following members were co-opted :—Mr. G. L. Mehta, Sir Padampat Singhania, Mr. N. R. Sarker, Sir A. H. Ghaznavi, Mr. A. D. Shroff, and Mr. G. D. Birla. The session then concluded.

All India Manufacturers' Conference

Third Session—Baroda—13th. and 14th. February 1943

Presidential Address

"We are trying to spread the policy of industrialisation in the country because it is the characteristic of all progressive nations to do so," said Sir M. Visvesvaraya, delivering his presidential address at the Third All-India Manufacturers' Conference held at Baroda on the 13th. February 1943.

"In this connection," he said, "there are three important proposals which the All-India Manufacturers' organisation would like the public of this country to give their immediate attention to. These are (1) arrangements to establish two heavy industries in every province the moment the war is over, (2) preparation of an intensive character to develop minor and subsistence industries in every district; and (3) an attempt to promote all classes of industries, including the above by means of a five-year plan."

"Heavy industries," he said, "will help to keep large sums of money in circulation, to increase the capital for building up future enterprises to reduce the import and increase the export of manufactured goods and to start industries needed for defence machinery. Then the eleven provinces of India may develop some twenty-four heavy industries in the near future and if a dozen Indian States also follow the example of the provinces, all classes of heavy industries will have been established in the country within the next two or three years."

But for this "it is necessary that leading citizens and businessmen who have the good of the country at heart should come forward and induce their local Governments to help to start these industries. If the Governments do not comply, they should, by co-operative effort, mobilise private resources to start them."

Referring to the five-year plan, he said that the object of the plan is to give a unified concept of the proposed industrialisation in the country as a whole and to invite attention to specific practical industries and measures to be promoted from stage to stage in the first year, and in the first five years respectively. "It will include," he added, "the provincial heavy industries and the district development scheme as well as any medium scale or other industries which may be started by businessmen themselves without the aid or persuasion of the A. I. M. C."

Sir Visvesvaraya also referred to post war reconstruction, which he said, "needed special attention in the best interests of both the administration and the general public." He stressed the need to equip the country adequately for future economic progress and said that "for this the establishment of an economic council or a development board composed of representative businessmen and citizens is an immediate necessity."

Sir Visvesvaraya appealed for a popular effort to be made to advance industrialisation. "Particularly," he said, "the goodwill and active co-operation of every right-thinking citizen from the middle and upper classes was what was wanted to bring to the forefront the question of industries and their importance to the future well-being and safety of the country."

The Welcome Address

Seth Chaturbhujadas, Chairman of the Reception Committee, detailed the industrial progress of the State especially during the regime of His Highness the late Sir Sayajirao and the stewardship of the present Dewan Sir V. T. Krishnamachari. He criticised the indifferent attitude of the Government of India to industrialisation of India. Seth Chaturbhujadas said that the fast undertaken by Mahatmaji in his old age caused great anxiety and concern amongst the people all over the country and the Government should reconsider their policy and release Gandhiji unconditionally in order to allay the anxiety of the people.

Resolutions—2nd. Day—Baroda—14th. February 1943

The first resolution, which was moved from the chair and unanimously passed, expressed grave concern over Mahatma Gandhi's fast and urged upon the Government of India the need for his immediate and unconditional release.

The second resolution, which was moved by Mr. Amritlal D. Ojha, related to industrial finance and requested the Government to adopt all possible measures for the encouragement of existing and new industries.

A resolution on post-war economic reconstruction urged the Government to set up a Central Post-War Reconstruction Board representing various interests for dealing with important subjects, such as, finance, war, demobilisation, conversion of war-time factories into peace-time factories and workshops, transport, export trade and technical education. It also urged the Government of India to see that Indian nationals alone represented Indian interest on any post-war international conference.

The resolution was moved by Mr. Sankalchand G. Shah, Vice-President of the A. I. M. C., in short and forceful speech, and was seconded by Mr. S. N. Haji who particularly stressed the latter portion of the resolution by illustrating instances as to how Indian interests had gone by the board in the past.

A resolution moved by Dr. J. M. Kumarappa requested the industrialists to introduce labour welfare schemes for the improvement of labour efficiency.

The conference also passed a resolution on the food crisis in the country.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya, in the course of his concluding remarks, appealed for the establishment of provincial boards and district councils to speed up the work of industrialisation of the country and to overcome all the obstacles in the way.

The All India Trade Union Congress

20th. Session—Nagpur—1st. and 2nd. May 1943

Presidential Address

Fourteen demands by the workers were enumerated by Doctor *Charuchandra Bannerjee*, presiding over the twentieth session of the All-India Trade Union Congress held at Nagpur on the 1st-May 1943.

These demands, he said, were release of political prisoners, dearness allowance to the workers in proportion to the rise of the prices of foodstuffs and other commodities, general reduction in the abnormal prices of food and clothing, war bonus, unemployment, war and sickness insurances, maternity benefit, one month's leave with pay, security of service, stoppage of all retrenchment, civil liberties, freedom of speech, press and organisation, recognition of trade unions, sufficient protection during air-raids, proper compensation to the wounded and to the families in case death is caused from injuries due to accidents from war effects and transference of power to a National Government.

Mr. Bannerjee said that in this war the worst sufferers were the workers. They were not given proper dearness allowance. He severely criticised the South African Government for passing the Restrictions Bill and suggested as a remedy the establishment of workers' leadership all over the world.

Over three hundred delegates representing over 350,000 workers attended the meeting. The public was not present as the meeting was held in the private hall of the City College. Mr. N. M. Joshi, General Secretary, submitted the annual report for last year which was adopted. He hoped that by next year the membership of the Congress would rise to over one million workers. Dr. Pillai extended the greeting of the International Labour Office to the Congress.

Proceedings and Resolutions

Mr. *Bankim Mukerjee* then moved the first resolution extending the May Day greeting of the Indian workers to the workers of the world, particularly those in Soviet Russia. The resolution was passed.

Communist and anti-Communist slogans were raised during the proceedings. Feelings rose high after the conclusion of the session when a free fight occurred outside the hall between two groups of workers. Some received minor injuries.

Two resolutions on the present political situation, one sponsored by Communists and the other by Nationlists, were rejected by the Congress which concluded its two-day session on the next day, the 2nd. May. Mr. *Charuchandra Banerjee* presided.

Both resolutions protested against the continued detention of Mr. *Gandhi* and other leaders, condemned the Government's decision not to allow interviews with Mr. *Gandhi*, urged the leaders' unconditional release and expressed the view that the present policy of the Government showed determination not to part with power. Both resolutions also demanded the immediate transfer of power by establishing a National Government at the Centre in order to organise the defence of the country against the invader.

The resolutions, however, differed in two respects. While the one moved by Mr. *Somnath Lahiri* (Communist) wanted Hindu-Muslim understanding, particularly with Mr. *Jinnah*, the resolution moved by Mr. *V. R. Kalappa* supported the principle of self-determination for the major minority community and suggested that until a new constitution was framed all the communities should urge their respective political leaders to participate in a National Government. Mr. *Kalappa's* resolution also suggested that on the basis of this declaration there should be no difficulty to end the present deadlock. If, despite this declaration, British imperialism refused to part with power, the T. U. C. should call on the people to develop the necessary sanction to enforce the national demand.

The Communists' resolution, on the other hand, called upon the labour movements of all the United Nations to stress on their respective Governments the necessity and importance of giving proper weight to the viewpoint of the Indian working classes while formulating their policies and programme for the successful prosecution of the war and the conclusion of a peace which would ensure freedom and democracy for all nations of the world.

Replying to the debate Mr. Kalappa explained the suggestion of sanctions in the concluding part of his resolution by saying that the sanctions referred to were hartals and downing of tools by workers.

The debate lasted about two hours and the counting of votes took a longer period. Mr. Kalappa's resolution was rejected by 46 votes to 68.

There was elaborate voting on Mr. Lahiri's resolution, the voting ending as follows: In favour 424, against 192 votes.

The President explained that under the rules a "political resolution" must have the support of three-fourths of the number of delegates present: the resolution was, therefore, negatived.

A second controversial resolution of a political nature urging the workers to increase production was, in view of the above voting, not moved.

In the morning session, about twenty-five resolutions were passed. The House decided to hold the next session at Calcutta.

The All India Medical Conference

Nineteenth Session—Patna—23rd and 24th. April 1943

Dr. Sinha's Tribute to Medical Profession

The nineteenth session of the All-India Medical Conference was held at the Wheeler Senate Hall, Patna on the 23rd. April 1943 under the presidency of Dr. R. A. Amesur of Karachi.

Inaugurating the Conference Dr. *Sachchidananda Sinha*, Vice-Chancellor, Patna University, said: "There is no process which can reckon up the amount of good which science and art of medicine have conferred upon human race. There is no moral calculus that can grasp and comprehend the sum of your beneficent operations. Ever since the first dawn of civilisation and learning, through dark backward and abyss of time you have been true and constant friends of the suffering humanity.

Dr. Sinha said, "Through your ministers and disciples you have cheered desponding; lightened the load of human sorrow; dispelled or diminished the gloom of the sick chamber, plucked from the pillow of pain its thorns and made hard couch soft by letting in light of joy upon dark and desolate dwellings. You have ever rekindled the lamp of hope in the bosom of despair; called back the radiance of lustre to the eye and bloom on the fading cheek; sent new vigour through failing limbs; and finally when exhausted in all your other resources and baffled in your skill, you have blunted the arrows of death and rendered less rugged and precipitous the inevitable pathway to eternity. In the circle of human duties, I confess, I do not know of anything—short of heroic and perilous, daring or religious martyrdom and patriotic self-sacrifice—higher and nobler than those of the physician, whose daily round of labour is crowded with beneficence and whose nightly sleep is broken so that others may have better rest. Thus your whole life is blessed by the ministry of consolation, hope and beneficence."

Proceeding Dr. Sinha said, "Government should give, in my opinion, careful and prompt attention to the question of teaching in a medical college through qualified teachers. The present system of having teacher and private practitioner combined in the same person is thoroughly unsatisfactory. For it would be expecting too much from the teacher to devote himself to teaching and research at the sacrifice of his practice. If it be urged that without practice, professors and lecturers in a medical college will not have practical experience for their work, the reply is that in the course of discharge of their duties in a medical college hospital, they will find ample opportunities for practical training. I am strongly of opinion that the part-time system of imparting instruction is unsatisfactory, whether it be in the domain of medicine, law or any other branches of learning, and should be replaced by that of the wholtime teaching staff."

As regards public health which is a separate department from medical, Dr. Sinha said, "The present system of medical administration by a close body selected or nominated by the authorities as members of one particular service has long

since outlived its utility and been found inadequate to deal with the present-day requirements. Medical and public health services should, therefore, be so reorganised and so co-ordinated with the allied services that the people may be able to command more prompt, more efficient and more responsive state service."

Welcome by Dr. Banerjee

Rai Bahadur Dr. T. N. Banerjee, Principal, Patna Medical College, welcoming Dr. Sinha, the President and the delegates said that the recent civil disturbances could not enable them to hold the conference last winter. Referring to humanitarian services both at war and home fronts by the men of the medical profession, Dr. Banerjee hoped that through the Medical Association the noble aspiration of serving the suffering humanity might be fulfilled.

Dr. Banerjee discouraged the crowding of cities by medical graduates and wanted them to serve in rural areas by overcoming the weakness for city's glamour and comforts, the reason being their duty to the failing health of the poor masses. He was ashamed to tell that some towns even had more physicians than their patients. He stressed on the teaching of social aspects of medicine as also curative aspects and wanted medical students to be more particularly attentive towards the expectant mother, pre-natal child and the adolescent.

He advocated the application of the modified findings of the Medical Planning Commission and fighting out of mal-nutrition and preventable diseases. Abolition of medical schools, he advocated, for bettering up the profession.

Dr. Banerjee gave an account of the Bihar Medical Association and its performances on many critical occasions.

Presidential Address

In course of his Presidential Address, Dr. Rochiram Amesur of Karachi declared in favour of "Medical Swaraj" as much as political and economic "Swaraj" unhampered by galling restrictions imposed on the country by the preservation and safeguarding of the monopolies of the Indian Medical Service and similar bodies in India.

Dr. Rochiram considered the I. M. S. to be an anachronism and it must be abolished. India existed for the I. M. S. and not I. M. S. for India. European members of I. M. S. were here to-day and to-morrow gone to another country, taking with them their most valuable knowledge and experiences which constituted a great drain of talent and irreparable loss to the country. He advocated the transfer of all I. M. S. officers from the Civil Department to the Army at a time of war like this and places vacated should be filled by the independent medical profession on an honorary basis, without involving provincial governments in any expenditure.

Speaking for the independent medical profession, the doctor declared that they were prepared to accept emergency commissions in the army on terms compatible with their dignity and national honour and after the war the best amongst them ought to find a place in the highest medical service of the country.

Dr. Amesur welcomed the establishment of the Indian War Medical Corps, but pronounced that there should only be one service like R. A. M. C. in England and should consist of I.M.S., I.M.D. and I.H.S. There should be uniform treatment without any distinction between these three groups.

The president was in favour of medical education being imparted only through medical colleges in future and said that medical schools should be abolished.

He referred to the great dearth of quinine in the country on account of Java falling into the enemy's hands, but pointed out that India could produce 68,40,000 lbs. of quinine on an acreage of 3,80,000 if Government encouraged the cultivation of cinchona forthwith.

Minimum quantity of quinine required by India per annum is about 12,50,000 lbs. and thus India can not only be self-sufficient in the matter of this all important drug, but it could export the same in sufficient quantities to all the world.

Referring to the scarcity of drugs in the market, the doctor condemned hoarding and black marketing and appealed to the Government to hand over such drugs as it was prepared to part with to Indian Medical Association, which with its branches spread all over the country would ensure equitable distribution at reasonable prices.

He appealed to the medical practitioners to form study classes to discuss the questions of health, industrial fatigue and a balanced diet within the means of all people and instruct the masses in the same.

Dr. *Rochiram* put in a strong plea for development of provincial nursing councils and employment of much larger number of nurses in hospitals than what existed at present. He was in favour of a compounders' registration act and doubted the utility of blood banks and strongly advocated the amalgamation of various medical associations in the country under the authority of The All India Medical Association.

Proceedings and Resolutions

The session of the All-India Medical Conference accepted proposal to hold the next session of the Conference at Ahmedabad, Captain *Phani Bhusan Mukerjee* was re-elected General Secretary while Dr. *Ramesur* of Karachi acts as President.

Following were elected to the newly-formed Working Committee of the All-India Medical Association:—Dr. *S. C. Chatterjee*, Major *Bhatt*, Capt. *S. C. Sen*, Dr. *P. K. Guha*, Dr. *Hanumantrao*, Dr. *Tripathi*, Dr. *K. S. Roy*, Dr. *B. P. Neogy* and Dr. *Anil Chakravarti*.

The meeting transacted formal routine business relating to working and progress of the Association.

The Conference deplored the absence of Dr. *Jivraj Mehta*, President-elect of the Conference due to his detention under the Defence of India Rules and in view of recent decision of the Federal Court as reported in Press, the Conference urged upon Government for his immediate and unconditional release.

The Conference also urged that other members of the profession detained under the Defence of India Rules be released.

The Conference opined that every individual in the country has the right irrespective of economic state to be able to obtain all necessary medical services, preventive and curative, general and specialist, domiciliary and institutional and therefore it drew the attention of the state as well as various political parties in the country to the above and requested them to devise means for the attainment of that.

The Conference also urged the Indian Medical Association to render assistance towards evolution and fruition of such a scheme.

SICKNESS INSURANCE

The Conference welcomed the Press announcement that a tentative scheme of sickness insurance for industrial workers being drafted by the Labour Department of India Government and representative of labour and industry has been nominated to assist Prof. Adarkar.

The Conference urged authorities to include a representative of the Indian Medical Association in it to evolve a practical scheme.

The Conference demanded representation of medical interests in the Executives of Hospitals, Railway Advisory Boards, Red Cross Societies and Health Committees.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

To assist the suffering public for securing supplies of essential drugs and medicines, surgical appliances, x-ray materials and laboratory reagents and other chemicals not procurable in India or not manufactured in sufficient quantity, the conference requested the Government of India to take steps to stimulate production of such articles and allocate more shipping space for immediate import and release forthwith part of the stock of such articles frozen in the country and arrange for such distribution through an Indian Medical Association.

Further the Conference urged the railway authorities to relax restrictions imposed on travel of such goods for public service. The conference further resolved that with a view to make India self-sufficient in matters of supply of pure drugs at cheaper prices, the Central and Provincial Governments should formulate and give effect to such schemes which would help the growth and development of indigenous drug industries.

The Conference through the later resolution urged the India Government to give effect to the Drugs Enquiry Committee's recommendations immediately to work up chemical and pharmaceutical industries without which the entire medical structure of the state would automatically collapse because of non-availability of machineries and heavy chemicals.

ABOLITION OF I. M. S.

The Conference regretted Government attitude of dividing medical graduates and licentiates even in military services and advocated abolition of Indian Medical Service because of creation of new Indian Army Medical Corps.

The resolution was ably placed before the house by Captain *P. B. Mukherjee* who was impatient with the indifferent attitude of Government in such matters. He said this perpetuation of class distinction between two Indian medical ranks must now cease.

Dr. *K. S. Roy* supported while Dr. *S. C. Sen* thought that creation of the new I. A. M. C. was not a favour but product of compulsion.

SUPPLY OF PETROL

Another resolution which created interest was the Conference's demand for supply of more petrol and motor accessories to medical men in view of the importance and width of the profession.

Deliberations during the conference spoke of medicalmen's keen concern over non-availability of medicines, drugs, surgical appliances and X-Rays materials in view of the disturbed communications overseas.

CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES

Unanimity prevailed over immediate introduction of chemical and allied industries in the country to save people from decay and untimely death due to scarcity of drugs in the country. Even during the War India must assert to be self-sufficient in medicine and surgical appliances was the equivocal demand voiced by the delegates including Dr. *Kumud Sankar Ray*, Captain *S. C. Sen*, Dr. *P. K. Guha*, *K. L. Saha*, Captain *Bagchi*, Dr. *S. K. Chowdhury*, *Tirulal Rao*, *Bhupal Singh*, Captain *Shivapuri* and other eminent medicalmen. Much satisfaction was noticed among medicalmen in the re-election of Captain *Phani Mukherjee* as General Secretary whose devotion, tact and skill were praised.

The All Bengal Economic Conference

Calcutta—11th. and 12th. April 1943

Mr. Sarker's Opening Address

The opinion that "the main task of evolving a satisfactory programme of post-war reconstruction in India should be entrusted to a small competent body of experts, led preferably by an eminent industrialist, who should get into contact with industrial interests and prepare concrete plans in collaboration with commercial interests and assisted by the Government", was expressed by Mr. *Nalini Ranjan Sarker*, in inaugurating the session of the All-Bengal Economic Conference in Calcutta on the 11th. April 1943.

"It appears to me," he added, "that under the present system of Government, plans for post-war reconstruction evolved by the Government under their auspices alone are not likely to prove very fruitful. Government assistance we must have, but it must be in the nature of assistance only."

Mr. *Sarker* considered that in any plan for future world-reconstruction it was essential that India should be given full political and economic freedom to evolve a balanced economy by a more rapid process of industrialisation. Any plan which would merely seek to maintain or improve the standard of living of advanced countries by perpetuating very low standards of life in countries like India and China was bound to fail.

Referring to the Beveridge plan, "designed to eliminate hunger, disease, ignorance and unemployment from post-war Britain," Mr. *Sarker* said: "A Beveridge plan for India would be unthinkable till our productive activity has risen to the requisite level. We have to begin our work of reconstruction right from the start and work our way to a higher standard of living from an incredibly low level. Barring China there is hardly any other important country

in the world which is steeped in such poverty as India. It is the dictate of practical wisdom no less than of idealism that we should be left free to grapple with the vast problem which has been inexorably pressing for solution."

Expressing the view that an overriding factor in considering any scheme of post-war reconstruction should be the elimination of economic fear between nations, Mr. Sarker said that to deny backward countries like India and China the freedom to mould their future destiny would not only run counter to the spirit of the Atlantic Charter and the aims for which the present war was being fought, but would involve us again in iniquities and inequalities and would be a perpetual threat to world peace.

Referring to the Keynes plan in regard to post-war financial problems and the American proposals outlined by Mr. Morgenthau, Mr. Sarker said: "It is clear even from a cursory examination that the British plan is drawn up with a view to lightening the two great handicaps of Britain in international economy, namely, shortage of gold and the precariousness of her favourable balance of trade, while the United States' plan contents with eliminating competition in currency depreciation and ensuring the position of gold in international finance."

President's Address

Mr. G. L. Mehta, who presided over the Conference, emphasised the need of comprehensive and accurate survey of India's industrial expansion during the war. He said that it was essential to ensure that industries started during the war were not left high and dry as after the last war but received an adequate measure of State support; particularly because they would in all probability have to face the impact of competition from outside and possibly a period of depression.

Mr. Mehta emphasised that the food problem before the country was not merely one of purchase or production but of efficient distribution. All-India control in which the different provinces fully participated was essential. Only a Government which derived its strength and power from the people and which was in intimate contact with the masses could take action against recalcitrant and anti-social forces. Mr. Mehta also emphasised the need of constructive utilisation now of sterling balances and of providing adequate safeguards for India's assets.

Dr. Sanyal's speech on food Policy

On the next day, the 12th. April, Dr. Nalinakha Sanyal dealt with the food problem. Dr. Sanyal emphatically declared that there would not have been any crisis to-day if only Government had applied a scientific mind. He strongly pleaded for planned efforts towards 'Grow More Food' campaign and asked Government to exercise rigid control over the supply and price of food-stuffs.

Dr. Sanyal said that the problems connected with food had assumed such proportions that it was dangerous to play with the issues involved. He asked economists and the public to approach the question with a scientific mind and not with that of the propagandist.

He pointed out that the principal features of the food problem to-day were (a) question of production and supply, (b) accumulation, storage and transport, (c) fixation of prices and (d) equitable distribution to the people of different income groups, including rationing. The Government of Bengal, nay, the Government of India, Dr. Sanyal continued, had so far pursued the policy of trial and error and it was now fairly well recognised that a good deal of the present trouble was due to the absence, specially at the earlier stages, of any planning based on a comprehensive policy. Even now there was not much evidence that the policy adopted by Government was comprehensive enough, particularly in regard to the emphasis that was required to secure larger production and increased supplies from within the country and outside. Another reason for the failure of Government's food policy was due to the fact that there was absence of proper efforts to create public confidence, which was necessary both for getting hoarders' stock released and for successful administration of any rationing scheme involving some amount of self-denial on the part of every citizen.

Apart from all these, Dr. Sanyal continued, problems connected with fixation of prices, planning of agricultural production, transport and storage, differential distribution and prevention of the vicious spiral of monetary inflation, required expert guidance and careful handling. Dr. Sanyal suggested immediate appointment of a Central food council consisting of experts and public men who could guide the Directorate of Civil Supplies at every stage, and through small local

committees in the districts create that degree of public confidence without which no organisation for food control during the emergency could succeed. Dr. Sanyal felt that it would be extremely injudicious to relax control measures and the people must be ready for more and more rigid steps for getting existing stocks in the province available for the market and for ensuring its proper distribution for the good of greater numbers. In this process, Dr. Sanyal said, it was the people in general and their trusted representatives who had to take up their share of the responsibility and it should be the duty of Government to seek their co-operation at every stage.

"From the point of view of food, the problem in Bengal is of increased production and not of price control or rationing etc." stated Dr. Sanyal in conclusion. He added: "Even if in this month of April 1943 Government sends out preachers to rural areas and induce villagers to grow food by the month of September or October there would be sufficient food in the province which would render all questions relating to control etc. unnecessary. The "grow more food" campaign was initiated at a tea party at the Firpos. There is no other evidence available that the campaign was conducted with vigour and in right direction.

Dr. Cyril Fox's Speech

Dr. Cyril S. Fox, in the course of his speech, said that India exported yearly about Rs. 6.4 crores worth of minerals, ores, etc., as raw materials, she was also importing goods made from mineral substances to the value of Rs. 64 crores. Many of these imports such as kerosene, petrol, lubricating oil and certain metals, such as copper, lead, tin and zinc, could not be supplied from Indian sources. However, allowing for these actual deficiencies, he would estimate that perhaps Rs. 20 crores worth of the imports (made from minerals, ores etc.) could be prepared in India, if the manufacturing machinery and other facilities were available. It did not follow however that any additional production of minerals, ores, etc., would result from this mere transfer of the manufacturing centres.

Continuing Dr. Fox said: It seems to me therefore a very doubtful sort of expedient to try to curtail exports of raw materials of minerals, ores etc. Any ideas which plan to restrict exports must as a general rule be unsound in principle. However in this connexion India will have to take full notice of the terms, especially the Preamble and the Fourth Clause of the Atlantic Charter. It would seem to be far simpler and safer to develop those industries whose metallic products might yield a higher export average value than the raw ores and minerals. Semifabricated goods may also be substituted for the raw materials where the latter is not quite high enough in quantity to stand export.

Dealing with the question of water which was most vital of all minerals, Dr. Fox said that it was because of seasonal supply that the question of storage of water on a vast scale was a fundamental consideration. Until this was appreciated the hope of controlling floods, or of having assured supplies of water and also of establishing hydro-electric products for providing cheap electrical energy would not be realised. The lesson was so obvious that it was difficult to understand why lack of funds and want of courage should keep the object in a perpetual state of enquiry.

Referring to coal, Dr. Fox said that under normal conditions India probably produced the cheapest coal in the world. Little use, he said, was made of the low grade coals in India and the valuable coking coals were used largely for other purposes than for the preparation of metallurgical coke. Annually about 15 million tons of caking coal were extracted of which less than million tons were used in coke making. For each ton of coal taken out of the collieries nearly one ton was left in the workings and regarded as lost. Again of the 12 million tons of caking coal which were used for steam raising purposes, the coal was burnt raw and there was thus no recovery of tar, gases or any other by-products. Many calculations had been made to show that electric energy could be generated from coal in India at less than one pice a unit. It had also been repeatedly pointed out that millions of gallons of high octane benzon could be secured from the distillation of coal if this was encouraged.

Referring to Iron he said that the yield was nearly 2,000,000 tons of pig iron of which half was used in preparing steel. If the entire 15 million tons of caking coal produced each year was used for coke making and if iron ore smelting was carried on to its fullest, the yield would be 10,000,000 tons of pig iron. Half of this would provide for 4,500,000 tons of steel to say nothing of all the valuable by-products from the coke making operations.

Indian Debate in Parliament

House of Commons—London—30th. March 1943

Mr. Amery's Speech

The reckless and defeatist action of last year made it difficult, indeed dangerous, to consider any concessions for Mr. Gandhi in the absence of the "most explicit assurances and effective guarantees of a complete change of attitude among those who have brought so much unhappiness upon India and might still endanger the entire Allied cause in those future operations which must be based on India. There is no sign of any such change in Mr. Gandhi," said the Rt. Hon'ble L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, opening the debate on the general situation in India in the House of Commons on March 30.

The debate took place on a series of formal Government motions asking the House to approve the continuance in force for a further 12 months of the proclamations made under Section 93 of the Government of India Act by which emergency regimes were established in six Indian provinces towards the end of 1939 following on the resignations of Congress Ministries soon after the outbreak of war. These provinces are Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Central Provinces, Bihar and the North-West Frontier Province.

A further motion sought approval of the Government of India (Governor's Allowances and Privileges) Amendment Order, 1943, made in pursuance of Section 309 of the Government of India Act.

Mr. Amery said: "The resolutions before the House concern only six of the 11 provinces of India. In the remaining five provinces Indian ministries responsible to Indian legislature control a vast majority of the subjects affecting the daily life of their fellow citizens."

"It is only in the provinces controlled by the Congress Party's organisation that self-Government was suspended by the order of the so-called High Command of the Congress Party in October, 1939, and the Governors had been compelled to shoulder the direct responsibilities of the Government. They do so under the provisions of section 93 of the Government of India Act. These are emergency provisions and as such properly come before this House for a periodic review. I need not add that they are also under constant review by the Viceroy and the Governors concerned.

"In two provinces where the Ministries were originally ordered out by the Congress dictatorship self-Government has been resumed. A resumption of self-government in the other provinces can take place whenever Ministers can be found in a position to conduct affairs and co-operate in the war effort. The door remains open and the whole situation remains under constant review.

Congress Party's Policy

"The origin of the situation and the reasons for its present continuance can only be understood in the light of the nature and policy of the Congress Party. Originally democratic in its organisation and constitutional in its methods, the Congress Party has progressively become a dictatorship aiming at the expulsion by revolutionary, though professedly non-violent, methods of the existing British *Raj* and its supersession by a Congress *Raj*. For a detailed story of the evolution I can only commend to the House the masterly objective survey of the last seven years of Indian politics embodied in the second volume of Professor Coupland's report to the Nuffield Trust.

"For myself I will only go back over the past sufficiently to make the events of the recent months intelligible. The particular character and methods of the Congress Party have largely been shaped by a single man, Mr. Gandhi. I shall not attempt here to assess the qualities of the remarkable and enigmatic personality. Many members have no doubt read the recent book *Grey Eminence* in which Aldous Huxley describes the combination in one person, Father Joseph de Trambly, of a devout mystic with an unscrupulous political adviser who helped Cardinal Richelieu to keep Europe distracted by a generation of disastrous war.

"It is enough for me to say that Mr. Gandhi's peculiar appeal to the Hindu veneration for the ascetic helped to make him the unquestioned dictator—a permanent super-president—to use Pandit Nehru's description—of by far the largest, best financed and most rigidly drilled party organisation in India.

Results Of 1937 Elections

"In the provincial elections of 1937 the Congress Party secured 711 out of 1585 seats. This was less than a majority even in British India, but it was enough to give the party an absolute majority in five provinces and control in three others. This unexpected result would seem to have intoxicated the Congress Party leaders with a sense of new-found power. Overriding and ignoring the growing intensity of the opposition which they were piling up in India itself, they persuaded themselves that they, and they alone, were India. Only a relatively small effort, so it seemed to them, was still required to displace British rule at the Centre and for the Congress Party, to use Mr. *Gandhi's* phrase, to 'take delivery'.

"The imminence of war came as a shock not only to Mr. *Gandhi's* sincere pacifism but also to those dreams of early power. At the first sign of the preparations to meet the coming danger Congress members were ordered to boycott the Assembly. In their absence the Central Legislature unquestioningly accepted the brief statement in which *Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan*, as the Leader of the House, declared that all present were determined to do their duty to the King and country. The far-reaching provisions of the Defence of India Act were passed without a division.

The ministries and legislatures of the Punjab, Bengal and Sind endorsed the attitude of the Central Legislature as did the Mahasabha and Liberal Parties. The Princes of India, both individually and afterwards, by a unanimous vote of the Chamber of Princes, vindicated their traditional loyalty to the King-Emperor by their pledges and actions. The part which India has played in the war is known to all the world. It is as well that I should remind the House of these facts.

"They are a conclusive answer to the wholly untruthful legend promulgated by the Congress Party and since, I regret to say, only too readily swallowed outside—the legend of a reluctant India dragged into a war in which she had no voice and in whose issues she felt no concern.

"During the next few weeks Lord Linlithgow strove with unwearied patience to persuade the Congress leaders to co-operate with the Government and with the leaders of other parties in support of the war effort. The only answer was the summary edict of the 'High Command' suspending self-government in the Congress Party provinces. In the following August, the Viceroy issued a far-reaching declaration which in effect, pledged us to the acceptance, at the earliest possible moment after the war, of India's completely free and equal partnership in the British family of nations under a constitution of her own devising. At the same time it invited party leaders on the strength of a pledge to co-operate in the war effort by joining the Viceroy's Executive. Mr. *Gandhi* and his colleagues contemptuously refused even to discuss the offer, and Mr. *Gandhi* followed up the refusal by launching a campaign of individual protest against India's participation in the war. That campaign proved a complete fiasco and petered out in the course of 1941.

"In March last year the Minister of Aircraft Production, *Sir Stafford Cripps*, went out to India. The proposals he was charged to explain were so far-reaching, so generous and so explicit that at one time it seemed almost inconceivable that they could be rejected. Even within the ranks of the Congress Working Committee influential elements were known to be strongly in favour of acceptance. Why then were they rejected? For two reasons. The first was the same reason as that which had led to a contemptuous rejection of the declaration of August, 1940. It was the assumption underlying both the declarations that India can only be free under a constitutional system arrived at by agreement between the main elements in her national life. Both, in fact, denied the Congress Party's claim to 'take delivery' of India at our hands.

"The vast Congress demands took the form of the immediate setting up of a national government with full cabinet powers and it was an attempt to snatch that delivery.

"*Sir Stafford Cripps* was bound to reject it, acceptance would have wrecked all prospect of agreement with the minorities.

Japanese Advance in Burma

"There was, however, another and, at the moment, perhaps even a stronger reason for the rejection. What was that moment? It was the moment of our worst defeat in the East. The Cripps Mission was announced by the Prime Minister on March 11, three days after the fall of Rangoon. While negotiations were in

progress the Japanese were advancing rapidly. Not only Ceylon but India's coastal ports suffered bombing raids which looked like the harbingers of far worse to come for the great cities of eastern India.

"It never occurred to us here that there was any connection between the event and the sending out of Sir Stafford Cripps. For Mr. Gandhi the connection would seem to have been only too obvious. In his eyes the Cripps Mission was the hoisting of a distress signal—a belated appeal to the Congress to commit itself to a war policy which could only help to bring upon India the horrors of invasion. Our offer was to him nothing more than—I quote his own words—'a post-dated cheque on a failing bank.'

"During the week that followed the rejection of our proposal, a week of continuous reverses in Burma, Mr. Gandhi concentrated all his efforts on a campaign by which the British Government in India was to be forced to quit India and hand over the control of the continent to such a government as might or might not emerge or abandon it to anarchy. How far he really believed the Government of India could be forced to surrender in view of the precariousness of the military situation or how far he was mainly concerned with reinsuring the Congress with victorious Japanese invaders it is impossible to say.

"The House will have read in the White Paper Mr. Gandhi's original draft resolution of last April which began with the conclusion 'Britain is incapable of defending India' and free India's first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. It will also have followed the successive stages by which the original resolution was modified in deference to those elements like Pandit Nehru who were not only committed by their sincerely expressed past utterances to sympathy with China and Russia but were more alive to the desirability of conciliating opinion here and in the United States. With the one exception, however, of Mr. Rajagopalachari, whose earnest and prophetic letter of appeal to Mr. Gandhi, I hope, has been read by every member, the doubting members of the Working Committee seem to have been content with the facade of the resolution.

"What is more significant is that they seem to have acquiesced in its conversion from a general demand that Britain should quit India to the specific threat contained in the resolution of July 14 last. This demand was to be enforced by a campaign of mass civil disobedience or, to use Mr. Gandhi's own words, 'by open rebellion.'

They did endorse the demand that there should be an open rebellion unless their claim was admitted. On August 8, the All-India Congress Committee gave definite endorsement and sanction to the rebellion.

Viceroy's Cabinet Praised

"It may help to understand all that lay behind the decision when I remind the House that the month which preceded it had seen us driven in retreat within 50 miles of Alexandria and recorded the fall of Rostov and the imminent threat to Stalingrad and the Caucasus, while only the monsoon, shortly to break, seemed to stand between India and a Japanese invasion.

"Happily there was better and sterner stuff in India than the Congress leaders reckoned.

"Not only India but the whole Allied cause owed a deep debt of gratitude to those Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive whose swift and resolute decision to arrest the organisers of mischief caused the rebellion to go off at half-cock.

"It owes no less to the loyal civil servants, Indian policemen and soldiers who stood faithful to their trust through the anxious and trying weeks which followed, and to the vast majority of the Indian public, Hindu as well as Muslim, who stood aloof and even gave their active support to the authorities.

"With the actual character and course of the Congress rebellion I dealt at some length in the debate in October last. The whole subject is dealt with comprehensively and conclusively in the White Paper. If there are members who, having studied the White Paper can still believe that a really non-violent movement of national protest was all that was ever intended or that Mr. Gandhi cannot have any illusions as to the nature of the conflagration which he was determined to spread all over India, I have really nothing to say to them, nor, is there anything I can say to those who are still prepared to argue that a concentrated and skilled attack upon vital sectors of strategical communications and upon all Government buildings, associated as they were both physically and in public estimate with the Congress Party, were merely a spontaneous manifestation of public indignation at the arrest of popular political leaders.

Limit To Credulity

"There is a limit to credulity, and no one who has taken pains to go through the White Paper can remain in doubt as to what was intended and what was, in fact, attempted. The case against Mr. *Gandhi* and his associates is overwhelming. I have seen it asserted in certain quarters that the White Paper is a mere case for the prosecution, unsupported by evidence required for conviction. It is a statement of facts, many of them elicited in the course of investigation before courts. These facts have not been arranged to obtain conviction for there has been no trial, still less conviction, of Congress leaders; but they are abundant justification for the Government of India's decision to detain the leading mischief-makers in innocuous isolation.

"I say additional justification for I must remind the House that the declared decision of the All-India Congress Committee was to paralyse the administration at a moment of grave national peril by a campaign of mass disobedience. That was ample justification and would have been ample if not a single drop of blood had been shed or a single rail torn up. Flickering remnants of the conflagration still occur sporadically.

"The need for watchfulness remains, but, broadly speaking, I think, it can be said that the Congress Party's rebellion has been successfully dealt with by the Government of India and the Provincial Governments concerned.

Mr. Gandhi's Fast

"Since then there has been the curious epilogue of Mr. *Gandhi's* fast to capacity, happily successful in that respect, happily unsuccessful in the attempt to coerce the Government of India into granting his release by the creation of an emotional crisis. It is to be regretted that three members of the Viceroy's Executive, men who had done eminent public service and not the least in dealing with the troubles last autumn, should have allowed themselves to be swayed by that emotional crisis. Their places, I understand, will be filled in the near future by no less capable Indian public men. There is no going back upon the expansion of the Council which Mr. *Aney*, one of the resigning members, has since his resignation described as an 'outstanding reform,' offering enough scope for solid service to the Indian people by Indian members even under the existing system and still more by conventions which steadily and slowly grow up.

"To return to Mr. *Gandhi*, I understand the Viceroy has agreed to receive a deputation arising out of the recent meeting of the non-party leaders in Bombay. These leaders apparently wish to suggest that Mr. *Gandhi* may now be disposed to be more reasonable if allowed contact with his detained Congress followers and with political leaders outside. I think the full account which I have given to the House of Mr. *Gandhi's* attitude and of that of his party throughout the war culminating in the reckless and defeatist action of last year must have convinced the House how difficult and, indeed, dangerous it would be to consider any concession of that nature in the absence of the most explicit assurances and effective guarantees, of complete change of attitude and conduct on the part of those who have brought so much unhappiness upon India and might be still capable of so much danger to the whole Allied cause in those future operations for which India must be a base.

"I can only say that no sign of any such change of heart in Mr. *Gandhi* can be traced in his recent correspondence with the Viceroy.

"Where do we stand? Is there no conciliatory gesture, no sympathetic initiative which might serve to break the deadlock if not with the Congress leaders, at any rate as between the other Indian parties? I do not believe it is fair either to Lord Linlithgow, who has been unwearied in endeavouring to bring the parties together or to the other parties themselves or even to the Congress Party to suggest that the deadlock is something which can be resolved by mere sympathetic handling or some happy expedient which may have been overlooked in framing last year's declaration. The differences are far too deep and far too sincerely held.

League And Mahasabha

"Mr. *Jinnah* on the one side and the leaders of the Mahasabha on the other, to take two extreme points of view, are each contending for what they and the million behind them believe to be vital principles between which in their present mood and situation as they see it they can find no compromise. It is no use blaming them. Let us rather see where the difference lies and what has intensely aggravated it in the recent years. The Hindu majority of all parties, the Congress, the Mahasabha and the Liberals are substantially agreed on one thing—in insisting upon the maintenance of the unity of India at least for the most essential

common purposes. The Muslim attitude was clearly and unequivocally defined by the Muslim League's Secretary and spokesman in the recent debate in the Assembly when he declared: "The Muslims in India will never accept any form of Central Government which will place them at the mercy of the majority community." Are these points of view really incompatible? They have not proved incompatible so long as the ultimate control has rested with the impartial authority of this House. Are they really and necessarily incompatible under that democratic freedom which not only the Indian parties but all parties in this House wish India to enjoy? The conclusion to which I have personally been driven by my contact with this problem over the last three years is that the problem is not insoluble.

"But it cannot be solved unless we and still more India can get away from the idea that there is only one sealed pattern of democracy, namely, the particular form of parliamentary executive which we have developed in this country.

"I believe with all my heart that ours is the best type of democracy in the world—the most flexible and yet also the strongest and most durable.

"But it can only exist in a relatively homogeneous country where free discussion can convert the minority of today into the majority of tomorrow and where a strong tradition of national unity and parliamentary give-and-take transcend the exigencies of party passion and the dictatorship of party organisation. Imposed as the Central Government of a continent so deeply divided as India the system would only mean the tyranny of an immovably permanent majority or else the alternative of disruption. Would anyone dream of making our system the basis of a Federal Government for Europe? Let me quote Switzerland with its three separate races. Switzerland lives in happy unity under one of the most democratic federal constitutions in the world but one under which no one race or party can secure the control of the executive.

"I wonder whether Switzerland could have hoped under our system to have escaped the contagion of nationalist conflict outside our borders. Twenty-five years ago this House pledged itself to the progressive attainment of responsible Government for India. We intended it then and we intend it even more directly and more immediately today that India should live under a Government responsible not to Parliament here but her own people under her own constitution. But what we have too lightly assumed and what we have led India to assume was that this Government would necessarily be our own particular type. The nearer we have come to the fulfilment of our pledge the more acute has become the internal deadlock in India. The experience of responsible Government in the Provinces as controlled by a totalitarian Hindu oligarchy has enormously accentuated it. Our recent declarations have only widened the breach, and yet I firmly believe that there may be more than one road.

Rut of Accustomed Lines

"Like wasps buzzing angrily up and down a window pane when the adjoining window may be wide open we are all held up frustrated and irritated by the un-realised but insuperable barrier of our constitutional prepossessions. If only our mind and, above all, the mind of India could emerge from the rut of our accustomed lines and look for fresh constructive solutions wherever they may be borrowed from and adapted to India's conditions, I am optimistic enough to believe that the necessary way round the present deadlock may be found and perhaps found more rapidly than now seems possible. It is for the Indians themselves to find the way. They alone can find a solution for, it is only when they have found it for themselves that they will be minded to make it succeed. There is only one thing more I want to add. The House has been very good to me during the past three years. It has, I think, given me credit for attempting to make such progress as difficult circumstances have allowed.

"It has, I hope, given me credit for endeavouring to maintain a positive and constructive outlook in the face of a baffling and bewildering problem. So I trust it will bear with me in what I am now going to say. We have no reason to be ashamed of our past record in India. Never, if I may venture to echo certain great words used by the Prime Minister in a different context—never have so few done so much for the happiness of so many, done so much to dispel fear and alleviate want, as was done for the toiling millions of India by a handful of British administrators in the last century. The work was done, it is true, within the limitations of the outlook of that age as well as the local conditions in India of that time. But it was good and enduring work for all that. It succeeded because those who did it believed in their task and believed in themselves and

because we who sent them out believed in ourselves and had faith in our mission in the world. Because we believed in our mission, India believed in it too and responded.

Different Age

"To-day we live in a very different age. We are dealing with a very different India. Our own outlook on all these problems of Government and racial relationship has undergone and rightly undergone a profound change. Have we brought into the new age the same faith or the same confident vision that inspired the earlier generation? There was inspiration, and no one can deny it, in the old vision of a beneficent paternal empire. How much more splendid, more inspiring is the vision of a Commonwealth of Free Nations freely associated in equal partnership regardless of all differences of race or creed, a partnership not merely for mutual defence, of mutual trade, but a partnership, and what is more, a lead to the world, in all good living, in all right thinking, in all generous striving. If we have failed to inspire India with that vision, if our response to Indian nationalism has looked to Indians too much like reluctance yielding to pressure, if our desire to keep India within the Commonwealth has seemed to them a mere instinct of hanging on to some last indefinite shred of past authority, may it not be due to the fact that we have not ourselves realised sufficiently, clearly and vividly the vision of a united Commonwealth.

"How can we expect Indians to share the vision of a united Commonwealth in all the range of its opportunity, in all the breadth of its freedom if—I hope I may be allowed to quote the lines of Francis Thompson—"it is wet, 'tis our estranged faces that raise many splendoured things." As for faith, surely what we in this little island, what we of this loosely bound yet amazingly coherent Commonwealth, this youngest yet infinitely hopeful experiment in supernational co-operation, what we have already shown to the world in the darkest hours of the present struggle—surely that should give us faith in ourselves and in the ideals and possibilities of that Commonwealth in facing the tasks before us. Of those tasks there is none that can compare in its importance to every member of our Commonwealth as well as to the future peace of Asia and world with a solution on a stable and enduring basis of this great and difficult problem of India. We cannot solve it by shirking our responsibilities to the peoples of India and to the Allied cause while the enemy is at India's gates. We can only help to solve it by our continuing goodwill to India, by our active interest in India and by our encouragement of every effort that Indians may make to find their own way out of their present deadlock, above all it may be by imparting to them some measure of our common faith in our common future.

New Element in Situation

The debate on Mr. Amery's statement was opened by Mr. C. G. Ammon (Labour), who said that the Labour Party condemned the attempt to organise civil disobedience at this time. After a tribute to Mr. Amery's "undoubted sympathy" for India, Mr. Ammon criticised the recent White Paper, declaring that no good purpose could be served by harping back to past mistakes. "The rejection of the Cripps proposals," Mr. Ammon said, "might have resulted from the difficulties in which British and the Allied nations then found themselves." With the war situation brightening, further discussions may be possible. We should take the initiative. Mr. Churchill, broadcasting recently, suggested the formation of a Council of Asia. "There is a beginning. The door is slightly ajar. India and China in a Council of Asia could take the leadership of the entire Far East."

Members murmured approval when Mr. Ammon said: "We want to say nothing in this debate to stir up ill-will in India, but rather to send out a message telling India that whatever mistakes have been made in the past this Parliament and the majority of the people have no desire other than that India should be free at the earliest possible moment to play her part in establishing a new and better order of society in the world."

Mr. Graham White (Liberal) said that the White Paper contained no proposals for bringing a solution of the Indian problem nearer, but, even apart from the White Paper, there was no doubt that the Congress leaders or some of them were committed to widescale violence and acts of revolution. If other leaders thought that talks with Mr. Gandhi would be useful it would be a heavy responsibility to refuse them. The solution of the Indian problem might need new men, new ideas and a new approach.

The suggested Council of Asia provided a new element in the situation. A free

India must play a leading part in such a council in co-operation with China and Russia. It was time Indian politicians looked ahead to fit their country to play this great part.

They could do more in India than we could do outside. Saying he was glad that Mr. Amery had struck an optimistic note, he asked if it would not be possible even now to set afoot some method by which the future constitution might be studied.

Mr. Gammans (Con.) urged the Government to explain the British policy more clearly in the United States. The American public failed to realise what the Indian Army had done or the importance of the Muslim point of view. They did not realise that there were more Muslims in India than there were Germans in the entire world.

Mr. A. Sloan (Lab.) declared : "It now rests with us, not with the Indians to make a new approach. Their leaders are in jail. They are not free men to discuss this matter. It rests with us to reopen the negotiations so peremptorily closed when Sir Stafford Cripps so hurriedly left India."

Sir John Wardlaw-Milne (Con.) said : "We have to face the fact that it will not be possible for the Indian people when the war ends to set up by agreement any constitution-making body. We are too fond of understanding what we have done in India. We have given her peace and order after chaos, freed her from the worst effects of disease and famine and financially given her the most generous treatment. Although in deadly peril from Japan, she has actually gained from the war.

"She has become one of our greatest arsenals largely at other people's expense and there have been wartime developments which will be of vast post-war value to her.

We cannot leave India to her fate. After this war the world's entire economic system will have to be reconsidered between the Allies. Could we not at the same time invite the Allies to help solve this Indian problem?"

Mr. Harvey (Ind.) agreed with the criticisms of the White Paper. It should have contained, he said, simply actual statements rather than argument tending to place the entire responsibility upon Mr. Gandhi. He suggested that the Commons should appeal, on the one hand, to the Government of India to reopen negotiations, and on the other hand, to Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues to meet that act in a spirit of understanding.

Sir G. Schuster's Plea

Sir George Schuster (Lib.) agreed that the form of the White Paper was somewhat unfortunate. Sir George said that Mr. Gandhi carried the entire responsibility for a revolt intended to paralyse the Government and to make it accept the Congress demands in a grave hour of peril for India. As a political leader, Mr. Gandhi was a complete disaster to his party, to his country and the world. It was impossible to deal with him after the statements he had made. "I feel bound," stated Sir George, "to make clear that there is at present no possibility of negotiating with the Congress—no possibility of reaching a settlement during the war by any political concessions, and little possibility of doing anything with the Congress as long as Mr. Gandhi decides their policy. The Government will have my support in continuing the attitude they have adopted.

"The Congress must take part in any final settlement, but must be reasonable. Anyone encouraging them along other lines or seeking to appease them," observed Sir George, "is undoubtedly aiding a procedure leading to violence and bloodshed. That is the first reality in the present situation. The second reality is that the Congress attempt at a revolt has failed. That points to the existence of elements in the situation far removed from anything the Congress represents. The third reality is that the Muslim must be enabled to order their own affairs. The fourth reality concerns the British position. I hope it will be our unalterable position, clearly understood in India, that after a long series of concessions and attempts at compromise we have come down to bedrock principles. Britain can only leave India if there is a solution agreed to between the main elements."

Sir George Schuster continued that the independent and strategic security of India concerned the United Nations as well as Britain and India, and might well be discussed with our Allies. "But while it is important that after these disturbances India should settle down to a period of tranquillity we cannot be content to do nothing. After the failure of the Congress campaign and the failure of Mr. Gandhi's fast and now that Indians see the tide of war strength rising—now is the time for us to attempt a new initiative in India." He suggested that Mr. Churchill should

himself broadcast to India, not promising concessions or compromise, but stating just and generous principles. "I believe it is possible gradually to encourage men of responsibility to put forward their best efforts in finding a solution, but as long as they think there is any chance that in a weak moment we may make concessions to the extreme demands of the Congress we shall not get them to come forward. The honest course now is to make clear that we will never do that. Although that may sound violent language, in the long run it will be a procedure most likely to keep the peace."

Mr. *Ridley* (Lab.) said that there must be reciprocity between India and Britain and he was pessimistic about reciprocity from the Congress; but certain leaders of Indian opinion were endeavouring to find a basis for agreement. He suggested that Government should state that the Cripps' offer still stood, and he thought that conversations would be more helpful if conducted in London with Mr. *Amery* or Mr. *Churchill*.

Mr. *H. J. S. Wedderburn* (Con.) who was a member of the parliamentary delegation which visited India on its way to and from China, paid a special tribute to the Indian police and hoped that their courage had been properly recognised. It seemed fairly obvious, he said, that the majority of the Congress Committee believed that the United Nations would not emerge victorious. While the political parties here had become united in their desire to give India freedom, exactly the opposite process had been going on in India. There the political parties were less and less disposed to concede anything. If the British quit India an indefinite civil war would follow until some other State intervened. Wise statesmanship in India would always understand that for the good of democracy and the peace of the world the British Commonwealth must not be dissolved.

The debate then concluded and Mr. *Attlee* replied.

Mr. Attlee's Reply

Mr. *Attlee* said: "I have heard and taken part in a great many debates in this House on the Indian problem and some of these debates were marked by a good deal of heat. But as years passed I think we can note greater knowledge on the part of all members regarding the problem and its difficulties; secondly, great appreciation of the need for satisfying the aspirations of all peoples of India for self-government; thirdly, a more practical approach; and fourthly, a far greater unity of outlook on the part of the members of the House. I would today have liked leaders of Indian opinion of all communities to be present to hear this debate. I am quite sure that they would have been struck by the spirit of the speeches made.

"I have seldom heard a debate on India in which the debate has been conducted on a higher level than this. I think it is one of the highest level debates I have heard. The debate has particularly tended to be forward looking rather than backward looking. It arises primarily on the publication of the White Paper. A greater number of speeches have dealt with many features of the Indian problem. I think everybody realises that the Government of India faced with this conspiracy had to act, and I think that the evidence in the White Paper has reinforced the views that members have formed. A member who referred to the arrests, greatly exaggerated the number of arrests. These arrests must be taken in their due proportion in relation to the enormous population of India. He seemed to ask why it was necessary that there should be arrests. The fact that some people are put in prison is not proof that we are carrying on a totalitarian state or anything of the kind. My friend if he was carrying on Government would, I am sure, have put people in prison.

"The suggestion that those who saw the storm are apt to reap the whirlwind is a matter that Mr. *Gandhi* might think about. A terrible thing to me was not merely acts of violence but the incredible levity with which a man of Mr. *Gandhi*'s experience contemplated the falling into anarchy of that great sub-continent of India. Anybody who thinks for a moment thinks of that population of nearly 400 millions increasing in every decade in highly artificial circumstances, because until British rule came India was always apt to be subjected to famines in all districts. It is only a very elaborate organisation, both of transport and irrigation, that allows these millions to live. Anarchy would simply condemn numbers of them to death.

Revolver And Bomb

"To hear a pacifist inviting anarchy is a terrible thing. Remember we have had examples over and over again that those who seek power through the bomb and the revolver are apt to find it very difficult to get rid of the bomb and the

revolver afterwards. Mr. *Harvey* in his interesting speech animadverted on the form of the White Paper. I do not think he was quite correct in his assertion. The particular part to which he objected was really a small collection of Mr. *Gandhi's* statements which were set against the Congress plan but in the body of the plan the same quotation is set out in its proper context. So Mr. *Harvey* can acquit the Government of India of any attempt to deceive.

"I think there is no disagreement in this House in the general desire of all of us that India should as soon as practicable attain self-government. We want the Government of India by Indians but that does not just mean that the Government of India will be in the hands of some one person or some few people of a particular race. "What we are pledged to is to give India democratic Government. Mere majority rule alone does not give you democracy. In a country which is not homogeneous, democracy can only work if there is due regard to the rights of minorities and one must remember—it is no good blinking the fact—that India is an enormous country full of great varieties of people who hold their views with tenacity and vigour. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, high castes, low castes, outcasts—all those people have their feelings. They have their ways of life to which they cling passionately.

"Political systems cannot easily be transferred from one country to another. Terms which are used in one country may cross the sea and be used to cover something quite different.

"We are accustomed in this country to think of our political parties but we have become very well aware that the word 'party' can have quite a different connotation in other countries. The Nazi Party and the Fascist Party have very little in common with the democratic parties which we have over here, and it is one of the troubles that in India there is a tendency for political parties to be much more like the totalitarian parties of the continent than the parties which we have in this country."

Labourite, Mr. *Sorensen*, interjecting said: "Is he not aware that on page 44 Appendix Three, the All-India Congress Committee made it clear that the Government they visualised is not an exclusive Congress Government but an all-party Government?"

Curious Position Of Mr. Gandhi

Mr. *Attlee* replied: "I am quite aware of that. I have read all the documents. I think that if Mr. *Sorensen* has read Professor Coupland's very fair survey he will find that my view is tenable, that there is a degree of totalitarianism in the Congress Party which would be foreign to this country. Besides that, superimposed on that system is the curious position of Mr. *Gandhi*. You can take what view you please of Mr. *Gandhi* but he does, on occasion, act as the dictator of the Congress Party. Personally as a democrat I object to the dictatorship of the reputed saint quite as much as the dictatorship of the notorious sinner. Take the kind of action which Mr. *Gandhi* has taken. He really acts quite against democratic conceptions which I believe are deeply and most sincerely held by the leaders of all Indian political parties. That is why you get a curiously different atmosphere in that country in which the religious position of Mr. *Gandhi* is intermingled with the political conceptions of democracy. I think, generally speaking, as in so many debates and discussions in India, everybody realised the difficulties and no one was very clear on a solution. I know I found that when I had to go round India, I heard at great length every possible difficulty and no one could tell me a way out.

"All they could say was one thing is certain, you cannot go back. Another would say one thing is certain, we cannot go on as we are. Another would say one thing is certain, we do not know where to go.

"The Secretary of State was, I am glad to say, helpful. Sir John Wardlaw Milne was rather despairing. I do not believe, and I think it is quite wrong to encourage Indians to believe, that this country can decide the Indian constitutional difficulty. I do not think that even suggestion that was made that we might call in our Allies could decide it, because the essential thing about democracy is this: not just its form but its spirit. You must have willingness to work any democratic system.

"I think Sir *George Schuster* was right in saying we must stand firm where we are and also that we made a magnificent gesture when we sent Sir *Stafford Cripps* to India."

Conservative, Sir *John Wardlaw Milne*, interposing said: "I had no intention of suggesting that whether by ourselves or with the Allies after the war we should

consider a new constitution, without the help of Indians, At all Round Table Conferences for years past, Indians were present."

Mr. Attlee resuming said: "I do not think one ought to encourage Indians to think that this is a decision that can be made by some one else. Our offer was made in the dark days.

"It may be suggested that it was made because those days were dark but we have reaffirmed it when our position is vastly improved and it still holds the field. It is the only practical proposal whereby all sections of Indian opinion will be able to sit together and form their own constitution.

"It has been said that the Prime Minister deliberately excluded India from the Atlantic Charter. On the contrary what he pointed out was that the Atlantic Charter did not qualify various statements which had been made from time to time about the development of constitutional government in India. Our declaration of policy towards India anticipated the Atlantic Charter and they are far more precise than the necessarily rather general phrases there. The suggestion whether it is not possible to work out some constitution for India other than that formed on the model of our constitution in Britain is well worth exploring. An attempt to fit the suit of clothes made for this little island to that enormous sub-continent is an impossibility. One could devise many forms of constitution, borrowing perhaps from the continent or the United States which would be nearer to the old Indian tradition of government and much more suitable, but the trouble is Indian politicians will not accept that. I have discussed it over and over again with them. I have said that the Westminster model is not really suitable. But Indians do believe that it is the right form of democracy. It is perhaps a tribute to ourselves here that they do look on this House as the supreme example of democracy in action. But if one tried to devise something of that kind the only answer would be 'we do not like it'. It is no good giving something that would not be worked. The fact is that words and gestures do not really answer the ineluctable sense of the situation. With regard to the suggested broadcast by the Prime Minister, I should be the last to undervalue the power of the Prime Minister's words but they cannot alter facts of the Indian situation. No forms of democracy are of any use without spirit. If the peoples of varied race, language and religion are to live together as one community there must, above all things, be tolerance; there must not be a spirit of domination whether by one section that claims intellectual, or by another which claims physical superiority. The misfortune of the last 20 years has been that Indian political parties have taken the wrong road—the road towards an exclusive and totalitarian outlook. I would like to see them return to the older, and in a broader sense, more liberal tradition of the earlier Congress movement. I believe that men like Mr. Gokhale, Mr. Rajagopalachari, Pandit Nehru, Mr. Jinnah and others, who are real democrats, could bring about such a return. We are still prepared and ready, when any favourable opportunity offers, to work to the best of our ability to help our Indian friends find a solution of these problems."

House of Lords—London—6th. April 1943

Earl of Munster's Speech

The *Earl of Munster*, in a maiden speech as Under-Secretary of State for India, opened the debate on the Indian situation in the House of Lords on April 6.

The debate arose on a series of Government motions to approve the 12 months' extension of the proclamations under the Government of India Act in reference to six Indian Provinces. Similar motions had been approved by the House of Commons the previous week.

Lord Munster announced that the Viceroy hoped very soon to be able to give the names of Indians succeeding to the vacancies caused by the three recent resignations from the Governor-General's Executive Council.

LORD MUNSTER said: "Let me leave the political issues for a moment and turn to another side of the Indian picture—the Indian warrior races. Perhaps I may give the House a brief account of the present state of the armed forces in India. The size of the Indian Army continues to expand steadily and recruitment, which is entirely on a voluntary basis, shows no sign of any slackening or abating.

"It is a remarkable fact that during the period of internal disorders last year the figures of recruiting reached their highest peak of 70,000 a month and the average voluntary enlistment during the last three months still is 60,000.

"During the disturbances the Indian Army was employed in assisting the civil power in the maintenance of law and order. Here was, indeed, a difficult and

uncongenial burden, but the task was carried out with the complete loyalty and devotion to duty for which Indian soldiers have been so long renowned.

"Governors of the provinces have all borne testimony and paid a tribute to the good conduct and friendliness of all troops in their handling of the civil population.

World's Largest Volunteer Army

"Today the Indian Army stands at over 1,500,000 strong. Besides having the largest volunteer army in the world, it also has the largest force of any one of our Dominions serving overseas in all the theatres of war. This army also includes considerable forces of the Princes, who have placed the whole of their services at the disposal of the King-Emperor.

"The Fourth Indian Division, which has fought from Abyssinia to the Mareth Line, and the Fifth Indian Division have both won undying fame and glory.

"There is yet another army about which little is heard but which is carrying out its vital but monotonous duties of watch and ward on the North-West Frontier of India. It is seldom in the limelight or participating in operations or giving battle to the Japanese or any other of our enemies. But nevertheless, when I recall the constant sources of anxiety of these frontier areas to India in the last war, you will see how vital are their duties in maintaining peace and tranquillity in the country.

"We should not forget the Nepalese battalions, whose service were so readily offered at the beginning of the war by our firm friend, the Maharaja of Nepal.

"Concurrently with the building up of the army, vast engineering projects have been undertaken by the civil population in conjunction with the service. Quite apart from the military highways have been built, railways have been improved and modernised and enlarged and important new factories have been constructed and a vast number of aerodromes have been made to meet the requirements of the expanded air force.

"The runways of these aerodromes would make a broad concrete road stretching across the breadth of India from Bombay to Calcutta, a distance of 1,100 miles.

Indian Air Force

"The Indian Air Force is the youngest of the fighting services. The first flight came into being in 1933 and the first squadron was not completed until 1939. The tenth birthday of the force coincided with the twenty-fifth birthday of the founding of the Royal Air Force. To-day this force has been greatly expanded and, in addition to its many regular squadrons, it also includes an Indian Air Force Voluntary Reserve, in which both Europeans and Indians serve as pilots. This force has taken its full share in the war. Units have operated in Burma, besides patrolling coastal waters, and they have also provided air co-operation and support to the army of the North-West Frontier,

Royal Indian Navy

"Lastly, I come to the Royal Indian Navy, whose size has increased tenfold since the outbreak of hostilities.

"Ships of the Royal Indian Navy have served and steamed in all seas, including the Atlantic, and actions of H. M. I. S. *Jumna* of Java and H. M. I. S. *Bengal* against Japanese armed raiders in the Indian Ocean are both outstanding examples of the accomplishments and heroism of Indian sailors.

Financial Aspect

"All this effort has placed upon India administratively and physically a strain greater than has ever previously been attempted and probably as great as the resources of that country are capable of carrying. I will give some indication of the financial problem involved and I am informed that there is a good deal of misapprehension and misconception abroad.

"Though India has to finance the whole of this effort in the first instance, not all is chargeable to Indian revenues and a considerable part is ultimately recoverable from the Imperial Exchequer.

"We have followed the principle always hitherto adopted, that India is financially responsible for her own defence. The revenues of India are not applied to the maintenance of Imperial interests beyond the borders of India, India, for instance, pays for all her forces, British and Indian, so long as they are in India. She pays for the numerous aerodromes which have to be constructed there, and all military works necessary on so large a scale, because an attack threatens from the east and

not from the west, where hitherto military preparations have principally been made. She also pays a share proportionate to her interests in the various factories for the output of war materials which are coming into production.

"On the other hand, she does not pay for Indian forces operating outside India nor for the material supplied to the Imperial forces in external theatres of war, nor for those we have to obtain in India for our own use in this country to meet our own wartime necessity.

"The effect of all this is that from the beginning of the war up to the present time, India has recovered a sum of £400 millions from the British Exchequer, and has spent some 350 millions on her own defence. In the financial year just concluded the Indian taxpayers' share of the defence expenditure was not less than 180 millions, compared with some 34 millions before the war. That is, by Indian standards generally, a very heavy burden.

"Recoveries made in respect of expenditure by the Government of India chargeable to us, together with the payment for supplies of all kinds through the channel of private trade, have led to the accumulation in this country in India's favour of large sterling balances which have been partly used for the repatriation of her pre-war sterling debt.

"By making rupees freely available to finance what we need from India and by receiving repayment in sterling, the Government of India have insured that exchange difficulties do not interfere with production in India in the largest quantities of both services and supplies that we need for the prosecution of the war over and above all the liabilities of Indian defence for which India herself is responsible.

Political Situation

"During the period under review there can be no dispute that the political situation has not progressed along the paths which we could have wished or anticipated and therefore, the final chapter in the tale of India's advance to complete self-government has still to be written.

"All political opinions in this country are, I think, agreed that the issue at stake today is not whether India should be granted complete control of her own destiny but only how and when it should be attained.

"Many noble Lords in this House have at some time or another been associated with the development of Indian constitutional progress, and during the past 12 years, or, I think I am right in saying, since the autumn of 1930, when the first Indian Round Table Conference met, we have gone forward with speed and determination to find in concert with the leaders of Indian thought, a basis for the solution of this bewildering problem. We have not, it is true, been able on all occasions to carry the political leaders with us. Indeed, the nearer we have approached or believed we were approaching a final solution—as in the passage of the Act of 1935—the sharper appears the division and the deeper appear the divergencies within the ranks of the Indian political parties.

"There is no unwillingness on the part of His Majesty's Government to transfer full responsibility in India once these internal disagreements have been removed and resolved. No man desires a return of the *status quo ante-bellum*, but no man desires either to entrust India, in Mr. Gandhi's own words, 'to God, or in modern parlance to anarchy.' We have exerted all our influence and all our power to obtain a settlement of the constitutional question. A progressive series of proposals culminating in the Cripps Mission have been made but to our regret—and I believe the regret of moderate Indian opinion—they have all been rejected.

Early Congress Attitude

"There are, no doubt, many noble Lords who will recall that the late Mr. Gokhale, a wise, strong and liberal-minded man and one of the founders of the National Congress, advocated reform of government by steady and progressive constitutional methods and so hoped to obtain and achieve results by political evolution. The intimate knowledge that he possessed was derived from a close and personal study of the art of government as understood and practised in this country. He demonstrated very clearly his own wish for the National Congress to be organised on democratic principles and under his lead the party represented a real national movement, including among its members all classes and sections of India's national life.

"But under Mr. Gandhi's lead the Congress Party no longer represents the whole of India's national aspirations.

Muslim Attitude

"The Muslims, who 20 years ago seemed disposed to co-operate with the Congress, became alarmed at the prospect of being permanently in a minority in a Central Government based on a system of parliamentary majorities. They broke away and set up their own lead. That lead ultimately developed a policy which to preserve the political solidarity of their own followers, sacrificed that unity which our association had conferred on India.

"On the other hand, the Congress Party has moved far away from Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Gokhale's principles and has become today a body which is imbued with totalitarian tendencies.

"All our efforts to find a basis for settlement designed on the British model have failed, to expect a sudden change of heart. Over a number of years we have made ourselves responsible for educating Indians in the form of democratic Government under which we live and thrive. Every Act of Parliament that has been passed has been designed to promote and foster this form of rule in India. We have always consistently assumed that our own constitution is quite adaptable to this sub-continent and we have always been fully prepared to assist in the export of our system for remaking the constitution.

Appeal To Party Leaders

"I venture to think that, if before the passing of the Act of 1935 any of His Majesty's Governments had suggested a constitutional government based on the system under which we live was impracticable for India there would have been an outcry that we were challenging the ideology of the Indians to shape their own government on the model that we had taught them and that had been practised so successfully in its home of origin. It would have been said that we were insulting their political leaders and damaging their prestige throughout the whole world. So any repudiation on our part would have been met with statements to prove our underlying insincerity towards India.

"In a changing world, amendment is always necessary, but whilst the broad principles of the offer which was taken to India by Sir *Stafford Cripps* are still open, I wonder whether the deadlock would be removed and progress made towards a settlement if Indian leaders of all parties would come with calm and quiet deliberation to discuss the chances of finding a constitution of their own manufacture—a constitution not necessarily built upon the institutions which we have found best fitted to our own widely different conditions but one which, nevertheless, would accord India a position as a full self-governing State within the British Empire and which has been made weather-proof and habitable for all.

"Surely it is not too late now to ask the great political parties in India to solve this problem in their way. No exertions on their part can be too great. Wisdom and sympathy are predominantly required, but, above all, a spirit of compromise and understanding must be the sum and substance of any settlement. We should, of course, be prepared to render any assistance and any help to such a body. I am not without hope that when India is confronted, as indeed she must be, with her own position in the post-war world, with all the opportunities that will be opened to her and with all the danger that will persist, the prospect of agreement amongst the Indian political parties may be more hopeful than it is at present.

"Finally, let me add, it is now for the Indians to adapt their beliefs to their own unique problems and needs. Let them turn to their task gifted with vision and foresight, so that they may eventually find and escape from their present perplexities. But until the day arrives when we can announce to the world that agreement amongst the Indians themselves has been reached, the British people cannot surrender to the forces of anarchy and they must continue to be responsible for the welfare and peace of this vast land and its millions of inhabitants."

Lord *Faringdon* (Labour) said that there was a basis for agreement with the Congress leaders, many of whose aims were the same as the British Government's. "The White Paper gives no evidence of its source or on what the Government based their belief in its authenticity. Denial of its authenticity is not perhaps conclusive, but it is at least evidence that the Congress do not wish the policy outlined in it to be attributed to them."

Lord *Faringdon* denied that Mr. Gandhi was dictator or that the Congress was a totalitarian body. He criticised the Viceroy's refusal to allow Mr. *Rajagopalachari* and other Indian leaders to see Mr. Gandhi. He suggested that the British Government should invite leaders of all parties to meet in London "to see whether

something cannot be hammered out." The co-operation of the Allied Governments should be obtained, if possible.

Lord Samuel (Liberal) said the Congress Party had to a great extent thrown over the democratic philosophy which it had purported to defend and promote. It showed signs of turning towards totalitarianism.

"When democratic assemblies were elected under the provisions of the Government of India Act, with the Governments responsible to them, we, the Liberal Party, regarded the fact with the greatest satisfaction. We looked upon it as a triumph for constitutional democracy, by far the greatest that had come about in any Oriental country. When I visited India I formed a very clear opinion that the provincial constitutions were working with remarkable success."

Lord Samuel referred to the second part of the report of Prof. Coupland who had been sent to make a survey of the constitutional situation. It gave a careful review of the success and non-success of the provincial assemblies and Governments and on the whole reached the conclusion that their achievements were admirable. During the passage of the Government of India Act doubts had been expressed about their ability to maintain law and order, but they had maintained them firmly. In social legislation they had a remarkable record and they were able to carry out far more drastic measures in that sphere than would have been possible for any alien Government.

"We, the Liberals, felt that our faith in constitutional democracy had been justified. But to our deep regret in recent years there has come a divergence. The Congress Party by far the best organised and most active and effective of Indian parties, has, to a great extent, thrown over the democratic philosophy, which it had purported to defend and promote. It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism. I do not regard Mr. Gandhi as a dictator, but the Congress Party are a single party, claiming to speak for the whole nation and they have insisted that elected Ministries in the provinces shall be subject to the instructions of the Congress Working Committee, and those within the Congress whom they term the High Command.

"Next to Mr. Gandhi the most distinguished figure is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose ability and self-sacrifice and devotion to the cause in which he believes, and whose intellectual powers have made him a striking figure in the politics of India."

Responsible To Congress

Lord Samuel then quoted a long statement by Pandit Nehru, in which, he stated, was included the passage "Ministers and Congress parties in legislatures are responsible to the Congress and only through it to the electorate." When the war came in September, 1939, and the Congress Party took a hostile attitude towards the Government of India the Working Committee sent instructions to Congress ministries in provinces where they held majorities to resign, and they did resign.

"They resigned not because they had lost the support of their assemblies; they resigned because while *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the High Command.

"That is not democracy, that is totalitarianism," said Lord Samuel with emphasis. "It is essentially the same political creed as animates Nazism, Fascism and Communism.

"India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have—it is a division according to religious communities. The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the population of India, yet in that totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole and when Mr. Gandhi called upon the British to quit India he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery."

Muslim Demands

Having described Muslim demands, Lord Samuel said they were a very formidable development in the Indian situation and added, "Those of us who believe in the principles of democracy cannot adhere in all cases to the simple principle of majority rule. It cannot apply to a country where there are fundamental divisions, whether of race or religion.

"This war is a major crisis in the history of the world. For us, minor issues ought to take second place. Parties in this country recognise that and have put aside, for the time being, their controversies to unite in defence of world liberty. The country has almost with unanimity come forward in defence of these liberties. But if this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, or the

U. S. A. had abstained from action, as the Congress in India has abstained, or indeed Eire has abstained, then perhaps freedom everywhere would have gone under.

"We are fighting not only for our own liberties, but the liberties of India and every other country, and those who now stand aloof are doing less than their duty to mankind.

"It is a pity that leaders of the Congress do not realise that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind. They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance.

Congress Complicity

"In the name of non-violence they have led a movement, which was characterised in many places by the utmost violence, and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian Congress leaders in the disorders. Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about that fast was ending it."

"Referring to the Cripps mission to India Lord Samuel said that in Sir Stafford Cripps "they chose the best spokesman that could be chosen, and he discharged his task admirably." He considered that the negotiations broke down on point on which they would not have broken down had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement.

"We, as Liberals, would not consent in the supposed name of liberty that Britain should march with confusion, riots, civil war and economic collapse. If that put an end to 200 years of beneficent, constructive, pacific British administration in India that would hold us up to the scorn of our contemporaries and the just censure of posterity. The hands of the friends of Indian nationalism in this country are tied by the doings of the Indian Congress itself, and they feel it is not the British Government which should be subject to our criticism.

"We may regret the tone of the pronouncements and publications that have come from Downing Street and New Delhi which have not always been very happily phrased. It is not only important what you say, but how you say it. This White Paper may be good journalism, but it is not so good as a State document."

Referring to what he said in a former debate, Lord Samuel continued that there must be a change in the position of the Viceroy, which would put the Viceroy in the same position as the Governors General in the Dominions. It would enable him to appoint some Indian statesmen as Prime Minister and enable him to constitute an Indian Government. But these points could not be a solution so long as the Congress took up the attitude it did and so long as by repercussion the Muslim League took up its position. There must be a change in the atmosphere.

"The only new suggestion we can make is that, since active politicians in India have brought matters to a complete deadlock that seems likely to endure, would it be possible to relegate the matter, until some change of atmosphere takes place, to the realm of political scientists? Let some studious explorations be made into the possibilities of the various forms of constitution applicable to the various conditions of India. The principle of majority rule having come to a dead end, what possible principles might be applied.

"Nothing could be better for Indians themselves than that perhaps some political science departments of great Indian universities should take the initiative with the co-operation, if they desire it, of the U. S. A. and this country.

"In the meantime, this House has no alternative but to support His Majesty's Government here and the Government of India in measures now before us today and other measures necessitated by the intransigence of the Congress Party."

In conclusion, Lord Samuel said that the House rejoiced in the staunchness of the troops, the police, the Civil Service and others in India, and rejoiced in the enlistment of a million and a half soldiers into the Indian Army and the vast material resources made available from India.

"We look forward to the day when a Council of Asia, with a free India and wiser leadership than is vouchsafed today, may be able to take a full and helpful part in world affairs."

Lord Bridwood spoke of his feelings of real pride and honour in the fact

that for over 100 years Britain safeguarded Indian interests with justice, true sympathy, care and honesty.

Lord Hailey

Lord Hailey said : "The Congress Party was obviously prepared for any form of violence and disorder, and that at the most critical period for it felt that as a result of such disorder it could establish its own predominance in India. The Congress cannot any longer assume, as it once assumed the position of sole representative of Indian opinion. We shall have to ask ourselves now whether, as a matter of fact, anything is to be gained by further negotiations with the Congress. It must be a matter that the Government has to face.

Lord Hailey urged Mr. *Churchill* to disabuse people's minds of false impressions which had been created by what he said before on India. He also suggested that Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council should be completed now and that a fact-finding committee of experts from a number of other countries should be set up to consider constitutional alternatives to the parliamentary form of Government for India.

Lord Snell

Replying for the Government, *Lord Snell*, Deputy Leader of the House, said : "The Indian people themselves know how difficult and how immense the problem is and they also know that the difficulties reside in India and nowhere else."

He advised Indian leaders continually to consider the problem without reference to past experiences. They should without prejudice or passion, recrimination or ungenerous and weakening suspicion, agree to examine the question afresh.

"The gulf which separates Indian leaders from each other and which separates the Congress from the Viceroy is not unbridgeable, I ask the Indian people whether it may not be possible that a third party, ardently desiring the good of all, such as ourselves, could not helpfully contribute its own experiences. What is required is that differences should be subordinated and we should build on the basis of agreement"

The debate then ended. Six motions were agreed to and the House rose.

The S. African Anti-Indian Legislation

Government of India communique

The legislation introduced in South Africa by the Union Government to extend the so-called Interim Act in the Transvaal for a further period of three years and to apply similar provisions to Natal has now passed all its stages, said a Press Communique issued by the Department of Indians Overseas, Government of India, on April 1943. The Communique added :

"The Government of India cannot but regard this news with profound regret and concern. Since the Union Government first published their intention to legislate on these lines the Government of India, through their High Commissioner, have made three urgent representations to the Union Government. In principle, they have consistently maintained the view, frequently expressed before, that legislation restricting the rights of Indians in South Africa does not offer an acceptable solution of the Indian problem in that country and is at the same time a serious cause of offence to Indian sentiment everywhere. In practice they have urged that the present difficulties can be met without restrictive legislation by administrative arrangements designed to give full publicity to any transactions which might be regarded as undesirable and to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon seller and purchaser alike.

"The Government of India are bound to express their keen disappointment that the Union Government have not been able to adopt their suggestions. While fully appreciating the Union Government's declared intention to undertake immediately an enquiry into housing sites and civic amenities for Indians in Durban, they cannot ignore the apprehensions aroused in Indian minds by the extension of statutory restrictions upon the Indian community. Opinion in India has unanimously protested that the legislation is repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune. With that opinion the Government of India are in full accord.

Asiatic (Transvaal Land & Trading) Act, 1939

The Asiatic (Transvaal Land and Trading) Act, 1939, came into force on June 16, 1939. The Act restricted three rights of the Indian Community in the Transvaal :

- (a) the right to occupy land not subject to Gold Law restrictions ;
- (b) the right to trade anywhere in the Transvaal ; and
- (c) the right of Indians holding trading licences in May, 1919, to transfer their business premises in the same township,

The main provisions of the Act were as follows :

- (1) Further protection for two years was granted to such illegal occupation of land by Asiatics in the area under the Gold Law as had been protected since May, 1930.
- (2) The issue of trading licences, except with the permission of the Minister, was prohibited, unless it was proved that the applicant and the person in control of the business were not Asiatics.
- (3) The hiring or occupation by Asiatics of any land or premises was prohibited, if such land or premises were not occupied by Asiatics or coloured persons on April 30, 1939.
- (4) The Minister was empowered to issue permits of exemption.

Debate in S. African Assembly

Speaking in the South African Assembly on March 26, on the Government and Opposition members' demand for immediate Government action to stop further acquisition by Indians of property in European areas in Natal, the Transvaal and Cape Province and to limit the number of clearing licences granted to Asiatics, Mr. H. G. Lawrence, the Minister of the Interior, said that the Government had been accused of not properly carrying out the 1939 interim legislation on Asiatic penetration in Transvaal. The Department of the Interior, however, had consistently refused to issue permits to Asiatics if it would result in penetration of predominantly European areas. He had asked for the allegations of illegal penetration to be investigated.

Referring to the allegations that there had been no restriction on Asiatic penetration in Natal and that he did not allow the Durban City Council and the Natal provincial administration to do anything, Mr. Lawrence said he had no

control over either and he never prevented them from doing anything. He had however tried to see whether the problem could not be dealt with on voluntary lines in a statesmanlike way and in the light of the then world position. The Government was anxious to avoid offending the susceptibilities of the Government of India, which was playing so vital a part in the war effort. The Government had made the most exhaustive efforts to deal with this problem and secure the co-operation of the Durban City Council and the Indian community in Natal, but these attempts had broken down.

The problem was not merely one of penetration but also one of giving proper housing to the Indian community. By passing a resolution refusing to revive the Lawrence Committee, the Durban City Council had refused the appeal by him to go into the housing question.

The Government had re-appointed Mr. Justice *F. N. Broome* to investigate the contention that further Indian penetration had taken place. It could not be contended that the Government was shirking the issue. He expected to have Mr. Justice *Broome's* report on March 29. All the facts required to enable the Government to take a decision would then be known. He was not entitled to discuss legislation in this debate and asked members to be patient. Future action affecting both Transvaal and Natal would have to be mapped out in the light of all the facts as they would then become known. The question of Asiatic penetration in the Transvaal could not be dealt with in a watertight compartment. In considering what action to take the Government would have to bear in mind both the representations of the members of Parliament and the Indian community.

The debate was adjourned until March 29.

Dominion Party Criticised

When the Assembly resumed sitting on March 29, Mr. *Duncan Burnside*, the Labour M. P. from Durban, made the accusation that the Dominion Party was deliberately whipping up the question of "Indian penetration" in Natal for election purposes.

Mr. *Burnside* scornfully pointed out that the ultra-imperialist members of the Dominion Party who were elected five years ago on the slogan, "Smuts would sell our Empire" were then thinking more about their seats than about the Empire. "Faced with extinction in the forthcoming election, the Dominion Party is no longer interested in the Empire but is using the Indian question purely for election purposes. Mr. *Burnside* also accused that party of attempting to prejudice and influence the issue upon which the Broome Commission was sitting and about to report.

Broome Commission Findings

The report of Mr. Justice *F. N. Broome* on Indian penetration in Durban was tabled in the South African Assembly on April 7.

The chief points made in the report were that in the first two months of 1943 Indians in Durban paid more for sites in the European areas than in any complete year between 1927 and 1939; that the number of sites acquired by Indians in predominantly European areas in 1942 was two and a half times greater than the highest previous yearly total—that for 1939; and that the total amount paid by Indians in the acquisition of sites in the European areas between October 1, 1940, and February 28, 1943, was almost equal to the total amount paid by Indians for such properties in the whole period from 1927 to 1939.

The report showed that the total number of properties acquired by Indians in predominantly European areas in 1942 was 195 (purchase price £336,500—ratable value £241,200), the previous highest yearly total being 78 in 1939 (purchase price £99,480—ratable value £81,620).

The report pointed out that it was not within the terms of reference of the Commission to investigate reasons for the Indian acquisitions of property in the European areas.

Indians' Protest

Before the opening of the Commission's public sittings on March 16, 1943, both the Natal Indian Association and the Natal Indian Congress protested against the narrow scope of the inquiry. After handing in a written protest at the first public sitting, the Natal Indian Association withdrew from the inquiry.

The Broome Commission regarded the non-participation by the Natal Indian Association as unfortunate since this Association had hitherto been recognised officially as a body representing the Indian community of Natal. The Indian community was, however, represented by the Natal India Congress "whose officials

performed their duties with industry and ability, and the Commission had no reason to believe that the withdrawal of the Natal Indian Association resulted in an insufficient investigation of any relevant matter."

The report added, however, that evidence on the reason for acquisition was not rigidly excluded during the inquiry. As the matter was not fully investigated, the Commission could not record any findings on this subject.

Indian Acquisitions

"Many reasons were advanced, and there is probably an element of truth in all of them. The abnormal conditions brought about by the war undoubtedly play some part. The majority of the more wealthy urban Indians are engaged in trade. The facilities of trade are at present restricted, and a considerable amount of money that would be normally absorbed in trade is in consequence seeking other avenues of employment. Many Indians, for religious and other reasons, decline all forms of investment that involve lending money at interest, and a great majority of them, as pointed out in the reports of many previous Commissions regard purchase of immovable property as the only desirable investment other than trade.

"Europeans, on the other hand, with alternative forms of investment that appealed to them, are not driven by the abnormal present-day conditions to purchase immovable property to the same extent as Indians. The Commission is satisfied by the statistics produced by the City Council that Indian property-buying has increased to a greater extent than European, and this is what one would expect."

The report mentioned two other possible reasons for increased Indian acquisitions, firstly, that the general public formed a mistaken impression of the effect of the 1930 Commission which found that there had been no Indian penetration in Durban, and, secondly, that Indians were anxious to pass through the door while it was still ajar, but said that this was merely speculation.

Pegging Bill Introduced in Assembly

On April 10, the Minister of the Interior introduced in the Assembly the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Bill, which sought "to make further provision with regard to restrictions upon trading by Asiatics and occupation by them of land in the Transvaal, and to impose restrictions regarding acquisition and occupation of land in Natal."

The Bill which "pegged" the then occupation of land or premises by Asiatics in the municipal area of Durban to March 31, 1946, has retrospective effect from March 22, 1943.

The provisions of the Asiatic (Transvaal Land and Trading) Act, 1939, which had been renewed each year and was to expire on April 30 have been re-imposed for a period of three years. Under the Bill which has now become law, no transaction between European or Asiatic for the acquisition or occupation of premises will be permitted in Durban, other than under the authority of a permit issued at the discretion of the Minister of the Interior. Such property transactions between European and Asiatic concluded after March 22 will be considered null and void if a permit in respect of the transaction were not granted within three months of the date after the Bill became law.

It is laid down that in addition to ownership, the restriction will apply to the right to occupation of land or premises. The restrictions further apply to acquisition of any share in or debenture of any company which is the owner of land or premises or the holder of a right to occupation.

Authority Permits

The terms "European" and "Asiatic" include any persons acting for the benefit of a European or Asiatic as the case may be. No European will be permitted to occupy premises unless the premises are considered to have been occupied by a European on March 22. Similarly, no Asiatic will be permitted to occupy premises which were not occupied by an Asiatic on March 22. In both cases exceptions may be made under an authority permit issued by the Minister of the Interior.

In exercising his powers of discretion, the Minister may "take into consideration the relative needs of Europeans and Asiatics in the area concerned in regard to housing, amenities of life and educational and recreational facilities and any other matters which, in his opinion, are relevant to the question whether or not any permit applied for should be granted."

The provisions regarding occupation will not make it unlawful for any person to occupy any premises as a *bona fide* guest in a hotel or to live as an employee on

any premises owned or occupied by his employer. "Premises" include any room or apartment in a building.

It is provided that the Governor-General may, by proclamation, declare that the restrictive provisions for ownership and occupation shall apply in any area in Natal.

Persons found guilty of contravening the Act will be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both. In case of continuing contravention the person concerned will be liable to a fine not exceeding £5 for every day during which the contravention continues. The court which convicted any person of such contravention may order his ejection from the premises.

There was no discussion, and the bill passed the first reading.

Second Reading Of The Bill—Minister's Statement

The Assembly was crowded on April 14, when the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Lawrence rose to move the second reading of the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Bill, the introduction of which, he said, had been undertaken only after the most careful examination of all facts and of the possibilities of solving the problem without legislation. The Government were satisfied, however, that a situation had arisen in Durban which, in the interests of Europeans as well as the Indian community, required legislative action on the lines proposed in the Bill.

Dealing with the position confronting the Government that day, Mr. Lawrence said there had been a number of full and frank discussions about the problem. Representatives of the Natal Indian Association had admitted that infiltration was undesirable at the very least since it caused friction between the two racial groups. That had been the attitude of the Natal Indian Association and other Indian representatives.

In spite of this report the Government made further efforts to revive the Lawrence Committee and deal with the matter on non-statutory lines. In May 1940, the Durban City Council had alleged that the rate of infiltration had increased rapidly in recent months and had urged the Government to reconstitute the Lawrence Committee with statutory powers in the form of a licensing board. An agreed statement had been issued saying that the Government would be guided by the measure of co-operation which might take place in future between the Durban City Council and members of the Indian community and by the extent to which penetration took place in the meantime. It was clear from the subsequent Broome Report that the fears of the Durban City Council at that time were justified. From October, 1940, to February, 1943, 326 sites had been acquired at a total purchase price of £601, 385.

Broome Commission Report

The revelation of the Broome Commission had given rise to a state of affairs in which the strongest feelings of the European population had been aroused. The Government were convinced that unless they took action racial feeling not only in Natal but elsewhere, would be fanned to such a pitch that it would not be possible for the merits of the Indian claims for adequate housing and civic amenities to be considered calmly and dispassionately. There was no doubt that the Durban Indian community had a very strong and justifiable claim to improved civic amenities. Full representations against the Bill had been made to the Government by representatives of the Natal Indian Association and the Natal Indian Congress. These representatives had put forward their case in a fair and equitable manner which did credit to both bodies. He was indebted to them for the manner in which they made their representations.

The Housing Problem

One of the reasons advanced by Indian representatives against legislation was that since 1932 the Indian community had not been given opportunities of acquiring land from the Durban City Council from its unalienated land. Indian representatives contended that if the Durban City Council had provided facilities for Indians in decent surroundings penetration would not have taken place. It was on this point that he differed from the Indians.

The two reports submitted by the Broome Commission had shown that of the 800 properties purchased by Indians in predominantly European areas in Durban less than 30 per cent were occupied by Indians. These figures did not show that "house hunting" by Indians had led to penetration. Undoubtedly, the reason why Indians purchased these sites was to invest their surplus money. For a large

section of the Indian community in Durban there was a much greater need for housing than had been hitherto provided.

The Indian Association had contended that from September, 1940, to July, 1941, there had been only three acquisitions in one particular block during the time the Lawrence Committee was still functioning. The Broome Commission, however, showed that in 1940 there had been 59 acquisitions of property by Indians in this area and in 1941 there had been 77 cases, and that was during the time when the Lawrence Committee was still functioning. That contention was a vindication of the claim by the Durban City Council that the Lawrence Committee had failed. It was an indication that attempts to deal with the matter along voluntary lines had failed.

Not A Segregation Law

It had been contended that the Bill was a violation of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927. This Bill, however, was not segregation legislation. It was an interim and temporary measure, providing for a standstill for three years. It was aimed not only against the Indian community but also against European sellers. The moral blame for what had happened in Durban did not rest solely with the Indian community, but also with those Europeans who had enabled such a state of affairs to arise. The Cape Town Agreement had not excluded the possibility of some form of legislation becoming necessary in future. In 1927 when Dr. Malan as Minister of the Interior tabled the agreement he stated that the agreement did not in any respect surrender the Government's right to deal with the Indian problem by legislation in whatever way it thought just. The Bill before the House was not in conflict with the Cape Town Agreement. It prohibited acquisition of property by an Indian from a European and *vice versa*.

It was not possible for the Government to take a decision on the allegations that adequate housing and other civic amenities had not been provided for the Indian community in Durban. It was, therefore, intended to proceed immediately with the appointment of a commission presided over by a judge of the Supreme Court, to inquire into and report on matters affecting the Indian community in Natal with special reference to housing and health needs, civic amenities and adequate residential and educational facilities, and to make recommendations on the steps necessary further to implement the Cape Town Agreement of 1927.

Greater Civic Amenities

He fully accepted the goodwill of the representatives of the Indian community in Natal, but the fate of the Lawrence Committee had shown that which many Indians had been prepared to observe the gentleman's agreement, and refrain from buying property in predominantly European areas, others had deliberately bought up as much property as was possible in such areas. It was clear that the present position in Durban could not be allowed to continue in the interests of both the sections and that penetration had to stop. Europeans had to recognise, however, that greater civic amenities had to be provided for Indians. In this Bill the Government was trying to create the necessary atmosphere for the achievement of such a solution. In the meantime, the Durban City Council would be placed on its trial. The Government under the Bill had power to remove the protection now temporarily given to the city of Durban, and the Durban City Council should clearly understand that both the sections had to be dealt with on an equitable basis. It was intended to invite members of the Indian community to serve on the commission to be appointed. He understood that in the Transvaal a stage had been reached where within a few months it should be possible finally to deal with those individual stands on proclaimed areas referred to by the Feetham Commission.

It was correct to say that there was at present a very cordial relationship between the Europeans and the Indian community in the Transvaal. In the Government's opinion this was primarily attributable to the fact that control had been exercised sympathetically under the 1939 Act, and in consequence conditions had not arisen which might have led to friction between the two racial groups. In these circumstances the Government considered it to be most inopportune to remove the control and subject the Indians probably to an anti-Asiatic campaign. The control exercised in the Transvaal in the last three and a half years had not been to the detriment of the Indian community. Representatives of the Transvaal Indian Congress, who had so eloquently and fairly urged the Government to remove this control should remember that the object was the uplift of the Indian community. They should take a long view.

In conclusion, Mr. Lawrence said he realised that the Indian community felt

most deeply about this matter. "I would urge them, however, to take a long view and realise that this position, which has arisen, would, if not dealt with now, only lead to their detriment; and it is in that spirit that I commend this Bill to the House."

Pensions Enhanced

Mr. Lawrence announced that the Treasury had agreed that grants payable to Indians under the old age and indigent pension scheme should be increased to 25 shillings and to 20 shillings monthly for persons living in large towns and rural areas.

Dr. J. H. Hofmeyr's Plea

The Minister of Finance, Dr. J. H. Hofmeyr, said there were certain provisions in the Bill of which he did not approve and for which he could not accept responsibility. "Rather than do so, I have tendered my resignation as member of Government to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has, however, asked me not to press my resignation, urging on me the need in the present emergency of a united front being maintained for the furtherance of the war effort. On that account I have agreed to remain in the Cabinet, it being understood that I do not accept responsibility for the proposals in the Bill to which I object, and that I retain a free hand in that regard."

Giving his reasons for not withholding his support from the Durban portion of the Bill, Dr. Hofmeyr said that while there had been pressure from outside to apply pegging to the whole of Natal it was only being applied to Durban. Pegging was in a form which was non-discriminating. Taken as a whole the decision of the Government concerning Natal took account of facts. He considered it fair and reasonable in all circumstances, and although from some points of view he regretted it, he thought it necessary, and was prepared to support it.

He did not object to the provisions of the Bill extending the period of protection in the Transvaal, but did object most strongly to the remaining provisions affecting the Transvaal. The problem of the Transvaal was entirely different from that of Natal. In Natal the problem was primarily one of purchase of property by Indians. In the Transvaal outside the "Feetham areas" no Asiatic could purchase property. The penetration problem in the Transvaal, therefore, was almost exclusively one of trading, and to a negligible extent one of occupation without trading. While proposals in this Bill affecting Natal were not discriminatory, provisions of the 1939 law which it was now proposed to extend, were discriminatory, and applied only to Asiatics. The proposals affecting Natal took account of facts, and he supported them; the proposals affecting the Transvaal did not take account of facts, and he did not support them. He had been asked to say that that was also the attitude of two United Party legislators, Mr. Kenridge and Mr. Alexander.

What was indefensible about this Bill was that the findings of the Judicial Commission were accepted when they suited one's own point of view and brushed aside when they did not. In South Africa there was nothing to stop Europeans having it both ways, but that was a course of action which one's reason could not commend and one's sense of justice could not approve.

The theory that the interim legislation of 1939 accounted for the cordial relationship between the Europeans and the Asiatics in the Transvaal was entirely untenable. The Broome Commission had shown that the position in the Transvaal had been held quite comfortably from 1927 to 1939 without such interim legislation. The statement that this legislation in the Transvaal was designed to protect the Indians against possible anti-Asiatic feeling would not deceive the Indians. They knew why the legislation had been introduced originally, and they had a shrewd idea why it was to be re-enacted now.

"Regretfully I have to say that I can only regard this proposal for an unjustified prolongation of an unjustifiable piece of discriminatory legislation as a surrender to racial and colour prejudice, and with that surrender I must decline to be associated," concluded Dr. Hofmeyr.

Col. Stallard's Support

The Minister of Mines, Col. Stallard, said that the peoples of South Africa had resolved that amalgamation was not in the interests of any of them. A relationship had to be found between the peoples living in the same country, who were not prepared to amalgamate, or even to live in close juxtaposition. He did not think that any population could complacently watch its character being radically changed and altered. He did not think that any city in the world would sit back quietly and watch that happen. He believed that if similar penetration by

Europeans in the Indian city of Benares were to take place the people of Benares would take action and sit back. He believed that a great deal of money which had been invested in properties in Natal had come from the Transvaal. These people were not concerned with the preserving of good relations between the races but with their own selfish advantage. The provisions of the Bill were minimum with which the possible could be faced with equanimity. He accepted all the provisions of the Bill and thought that the question of extending the provisions applicable to Durban to other parts should receive immediate attention. The real clauses which were exerting feeling were the clauses dealing with Natal, not the clauses dealing with the Transvaal.

He understood that three former Agents-General for India in the Union had sent a cable to the Prime Minister appealing to him to drop the Bill on the ground that it would upset those Indians who still believed that India should remain a partner in the British Empire.

Declaration Of 1922

That appeal, if well founded, would naturally receive primary consideration from him (Col. Stallard) and his colleagues in the Dominion Party, because they attached the greatest value to the component part of the Empire holding together. If any course of action was likely to militate against that, it would have to receive the most careful consideration. He had the greatest regard for the personalities of Sastri and other former Agents-General, and anything they said he treated with the greatest respect. But what value was there in their appeal and argument? Firstly, it appeared to be based on a misapprehension about the basis on which the component parts of the Empire had come together and proposed to remain together. He attached great importance to the declaration of the 1922 Conference of Prime Ministers of the British Commonwealth that each community would enjoy complete control of its own population. The former Agent-General were entirely wrong in implying they were entitled to interfere with or criticise the way in which the composition of the South African community was dealt with.

He had been informed that a mass meeting of Indians in Durban the previous day had called upon the Government to abandon the proposed legislation and to convene a round table conference with the Government of India. It was the habit of rich people who were prepared to risk the interests of their country to make appeals to democratic institutions so as to cover their tracks. He did not think anything fruitful would emerge from a round table conference. The Government wanted as far as possible to avoid doing anything which might exasperate Indians and wanted to dissipate the idea that the legitimate needs of the Indian population would be neglected.

Mr. M. J. Vandenberg (Labour Krugersdorp) said that the Labour Party supported the Government on the Bill.

Dr. Malan's Demand

The Opposition Leader, Dr D. F. Malan, congratulated Col. Stallard and the Dominion Party and other Natal members of Parliament on having exercised so much pressure on the Government that the Government had agreed not only to stabilise the position in the Transvaal but also to recognise the danger in Natal and include Natal under the provisions of the Bill. If speedy and effective measures were not taken Natal would soon be lost to the European race. He did not propose to impede the passage of the Bill, but considered that it should be passed in an improved form and should not remain a temporary measure.

Dr. Malan said that the appointment of the Agent-General for India had been made for quite a different reason than what his presence in South Africa meant to-day. To-day the presence of the High Commissioner for India meant unfair interference by another country in the affairs of South Africa.

Dr. Malan moved an amendment that the order for the second reading be discharged and that the subject be referred to a select committee, which should be instructed to make provision for the application to Natal of the restrictions applying to occupation and purchase of land in the Transvaal. The select committee should be instructed to report not later than April 19 and to introduce the amended Bill.

The amendment also sought further to instruct the Government during the next session of Parliament to introduce a more comprehensive measure providing for effective segregation of European and non-European residential areas in Durban and for definite and satisfactory measures to prevent penetration by Asiatics in Natal and the Transvaal.

The Speaker ruled out of order the second part of Dr. Malan's amendment.

Field Marshal Smuts Explains

The Prime Minister, *Field Marshal Smuts*, said that the Government could not accept the amendment. The Bill was necessary. The Government were anxious to have it on the Statute Book as soon as possible and no dilatory motion or any motion, even if it were acceptable to the Government, which would mean postponement of the passage of the Bill for any length of time, could be accepted.

The Government had hoped that it would not be necessary to deal with this matter during the war. The Government regretted anything which gave the appearance that it was going against a country like India which was engaged in the war with South Africa. There were very grave reasons why the Government did not want to take action, but they had no choice. The issue had been forced on the Government by Indians themselves, not the whole Indian community, but a minority who had no regard for the interests of the country or Indians themselves. The country was faced with the position that in Durban—which was a European city and which the Government were determined should remain a European City—large-scale Indian penetration was going on. After a great deal of argument it had been proved and admitted that there had been large-scale penetration since 1939.

The Second Broome Commission proved that penetration had been proceeding at a pace such as had never been known before, and in the circumstances the Government had been obliged to act. He did not know whether the first Broome Report had encouraged certain elements to embark on the policy on which they had embarked. The fact was, however, that there had been a complete change since 1939.

Government's Intention

He made no charge against the whole Indian population, the vast majority of whom were good, hardworking people. The Government intended to make a proper judicial inquiry into the whole situation. Only by exploring carefully the relations between Indians and Europeans in this country could it be possible to evolve a measure that would lead to amity. It might perhaps be largely by agreement that a satisfactory solution of the problem might be found. The problem was one that could not easily be solved. He was sure, however, that after a competent body had examined the question fresh light might be thrown on it and a new method of action found.

The country should not lose its head and attempt the impossible because failure might be disastrous not only to Indians but to Europeans as well. Eighty per cent or more of the Indians in South Africa today were South African born and part of the South African people. At present they invariably looked to the Government of India but he supposed that in time they would learn to look to public opinion and the European community in South Africa for justice and fairplay. But at present their weakness was that they immediately appealed to outside opinion and in that way the mode of solution was more difficult.

The country must be fair to its Indian people. The Government and the people of the country were bound to carry out the policy of the Cape Town Agreement. Complaints by Indians about their treatment should be investigated. They should not be made to feel that they are outcasts. Whereas in Natal the position was getting worse, in the Transvaal where there was control the situation had improved. The relations between Europeans and Indians in the Transvaal to-day were good. He had come to the conclusion that the Transvaal system should be applied to Natal during the interim period pending investigation. The provisions applied to the Transvaal were, therefore, extended to Natal under the Bill.

Concluding, Field Marshal Smuts asked the House to pass the Bill before the end of the session.

Opposition To Bill

Mrs. V. M. L. Ballinger (Native Representative) said that a real appeal to racial prejudice had been made in Natal by a minority composed of the followers of the Minister of Mines, Colonel Stallard. She disagreed with General Smuts' declaration that Durban was a European city. It was a South African city, and like all South African cities its wealth and development had been built by the combined efforts of a number of racial groups. A great deal of the prosperity in Durban resulted from the services of the Indian community. The Durban City Council had not made an attempt to provide facilities for the Indian population. The £2,000,000 which it now advertised it was going to spend on facilities for Asiatics was to be spent in the future.

Mrs. Ballinger said it was time that South Africa learned to govern instead of legislating. European prestige could not be maintained by falling back continually on the bludgeon.

She hoped that the petition she had presented asking that representatives of the Indian community be admitted to the bar of the House would be accepted.

Dr. *Donges* (Nationalist Party) said there was only one royal road by which the Minister of Finance could signify disagreement with his Cabinet colleagues and that was not to tender resignation but to resign. Dr. *Hofmeyr's* present course was an attempt to have things both ways.

Mr. *J. H. Grobler* (New Order Party) said that whatever sympathy was felt for Indians in South Africa would disappear if they continued their appeals to the Government of India.

Mr. *G. K. Hemming* (Native Representative) said that the Premier and the Government seemed to have been engineered into a situation from which they found it difficult to withdraw.

Official Reply

"Bill purely an Interim measure"

The Minister of the Interior, Mr. *Lawrence*, replying to the debate, said that the judicial inquiry which the Government intended to hold would not apply to the Transvaal. It was the Government's intention to inquire into social welfare and the civic amenities available for the Indian population in Natal. It had become clear during the debate that the main bone of contention between the Indian population and the European population in Durban was the provision of civic and housing amenities, and the Government was anxious to thrash the matter out.

Great problems had still to be dealt with in regard to the Indian population in the Transvaal. There was, for instance, the question of ownership of land. Parliament had already exempted certain areas in the Witwaters Rand from the provisions of the Gold Law, but the Indian community contended that these areas were insufficient to meet their legitimate needs. That was correct and the Government might have to go further not merely in the proclaimed areas but also in the rural areas. The Indian population in the Transvaal was entitled to an increase in the licences and the Government would have to develop a system under which legitimate expansion by Indians could be met without, at the same time, impinging on predominantly European areas.

Trading Licences

The Murray Commission had reported that the number of Asiatic trading licences had not been disproportionate to the total growth of the Indian population. In the last three and a half years he had issued about 2,000 permits for new licences and this was not disproportionate to the growth of the Indian population. It was the slow drift which in the long run caused difficulty. It was as much in the interests of the Indian community as it was in the interests of the European community that the cordial relationship that existed between Europeans and Indians in the Transvaal should not be changed and that an atmosphere should not be created which would make it impossible to deal with vitally important matters such as the releasing of additional land for Indians and the providing of proper housing amenities.

Mr. *Lawrence* reiterated that the Bill was purely an interim measure. Apart from the Native Representatives, there had not been any adverse criticism of the principles of the Bill. The Minister pointed out that the Bill provided for extension of restrictions to other parts of Natal and if circumstances arose which justified an inquiry in any particular area this could be done at once. It was the Government's intention to proceed along those lines. The difference between the present Government and the Government in which Dr. *D. F. Malan* had been the Minister of the Interior was that Dr. *Malan's* Government bowed to representations from the Government of India. The Government of India rightly and properly made representations to the present Government, but the present Government proposed with great regret and under compulsion of circumstances to proceed with this legislation.

Bill Passes Second Reading

Dr. *Malan's* amendment to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was rejected by 83 votes to 31. Native Representatives voting with the Government.

The motion for the second reading was carried, the Opposition voting with the Government, only three Native Representatives voting against the Ministry. Dr. *Hofmeyr* did not vote at either division. The United Party legislators Mr. *M.*

Alexander and Mr. *M. Kenridge*, who, Dr. *Hofmeyr* said, previously wanted to be associated with him in his attitude on the Bill, did not vote on the second division but voted against Dr. *Malan's* amendment.

Move To Extend Scope Of Bill

The Assembly went into committee on April 20 on the Bill when Mr. *C. R. Swart* (Nationalist Party) moved that the "pegging" provisions be applied to the whole of Natal.

Mr. *J. G. Derbyshire* (Dominion Party) said it was true that in Natal there was a strong feeling that the Bill should apply to the whole of Natal. While the Dominion Party would like to see the provisions of the Bill applied to the whole of Natal, they were prepared to make a gesture to the Indian community. They would oppose Mr. *Swart's* amendment and instead of the City Council of Durban being placed on trial, as the Minister of the Interior stated during the second reading of the Bill, the Indian community would be placed on trial. If Indian penetration continued in other parts of Natal, the Dominion Party would be compelled to ask the Government to apply the provisions of the Bill to the whole of Natal.

Mr. *D. B. Molteno* (Native Representative) moved an amendment deleting the retrospective provision of the Bill.

Mr. *F. H. Acutt* (Dominion Party) said that whenever the Durban Council had tried to establish Indian villages, Indian leaders had advised the rank and file to boycott them.

Mrs. *V. M. L. Ballinger* (Native Representative) said that natives had some land basis, but the Indians had nothing. They were a commercial people, who had to live in towns.

Mr. *J. S. Marwick* (Dominion Party) alleged that in most cases wealthy Indians had borrowed money for penetrating into Natal.

Mr. *Lawrence* said it seemed to him to be incumbent upon the Government to appoint a commission as soon as the Bill had been placed on the Statute Book to inquire into the position at Pietermaritzburg and it might be that the commission would have to make inquiries in other places.

Mr. *Lawrence* added that the Government could not be expected to ask the commission to undertake a series of inquiries, unless there was *prima facie* evidence that what was taking place in Durban was also taking place in other centres. The local authorities would have the onus of submitting such evidence in the shape of facts and figures. He envisaged the appointment of some one of the status of Mr. *Justice Broome*, who would be asked from time to time to make an *ad hoc* inquiry, upon the result of which the Government would base its decision.

He did not believe that the Indian community would rush to buy property in areas of Natal outside Durban in advance of legislation. Such action would prove conclusively that certain members of the Indian community were being provocative. He did not believe that Indians would prejudice their own case this way, and hoped that if some Indians were prepared to do so, the more responsible members of the Indian community would deter them. He very much appreciated the attitude of the Dominion Party which had not fallen to the blandishments of the Opposition.

Amendments Lost

At the resumption of the committee stage of the Bill, Mr. *Swart's* amendment urging that the "pegging" provisions be applied to the whole of Natal, and Mr. *Molteno's* amendment to delete the retrospective provision of the Bill were both rejected.

A clause prolonging the restriction of Asiatics' trading rights in the Transvaal imposed in 1939 was approved.

Mr. *Swart* (Nationalist Party) moved another amendment seeking to delete the provision that a permit might be granted for exemption from the provision that no European might enter into an agreement with an Asiatic for the acquisition or occupation by either party to the agreement of land or premises in the Durban municipal area or other proclaimed area in Natal, or for the acquisition of shares or debentures in a company owning such land or premises.

Mr. *Swart* also moved that the prohibition should apply to the acquisition or occupation of land or premises by Asiatics and not to acquisition or occupation by Europeans.

The Minister of the Interior, Mr. *Lawrence*, said that if Mr. *Swart's* amendment was approved the basis of reciprocity in the provisions of the Bill affecting

Natal would be abandoned. It was not intended to prevent repurchase by Europeans of properties previously acquired by Asiatics in the predominantly European areas, and permits could be obtained for such repurchases. The Government intended that this legislation should be discriminatory, as many Europeans were blamed in this matter just as many Indians were. He regreted the fact that this intention of the Government had not been sufficiently emphasised by certain opponents of the Bill, and the impression had been created that the Bill discriminated against one particular racial group.

Mr. *Molteno* (Native Representative) moved deletion of the provision preventing the conclusion of an agreement between a European and an Asiatic for the acquisition of shares or debentures in companies owning land or premises.

Mr. *Lawrence* said he was prepared to give the assurance that purchase by Europeans of land or premises occupied by Asiatics in the predominantly European areas would be encouraged and that permits would be granted for such repurchases. He would give the same assurance about repurchase by Asiatics of land or premises in the predominantly Asiatic areas.

Mr. *Swart's* and Mr. *Molteno's* further amendments were rejected and the Bill was reported.

Later, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. *Lawrence*, moved the third reading of the Bill which was passed.

In the Senate

In the South African Senate on March 22, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. *Lawrence* indicated that Government would during the session introduce legislation restricting Indian "penetration" into the urban residential areas of Natal. The introduction of this legislation was contingent upon the findings of the Broome Commission which under Mr. Justice Broome, had been taking evidence of the alleged depreciation of European areas by Indian property purchases.

Mr. *Lawrence* stated: "I personally attended to the question of alleged Indian infiltration into predominantly European areas of Natal. I realise Government will be charged with discriminatory legislation, but I also realise that people in Durban are not only getting restive but that the situation has taken a racial aspect and unless Government takes action, serious things might happen—riots might occur." Mr. *Lawrence* announced that legislation might be introduced in the next four weeks and would be retrospective until that day—that was aimed against speculation.

Referring to alleged infiltration of Indians into predominantly European areas in Natal, Mr. *Lawrence* said in the Senate that the frequent talks he had with the members of the Indian community and representatives of the Durban City Council had resulted in a conference in Pretoria some time ago when some serious allegations were made. If the allegations made by the Durban City Council were correct and if it was true that the position was getting out of hand which seemed to be axiomatic, the Government would have to act.

If the Government, Mr. *Lawrence* said, decided to legislate, such legislation would have to take effect from that day, the day on which he was informing the Indian community that the Government intended to act. The Government could not allow the people to rush in and put through transactions in the hope of evading any legislation that might be made. The only course open to Government was legislation and such legislation would have to be passed in this session. The whole matter rested on the findings of the Broome Commission.

The respective provisions of the proposed legislation might also be applied by the Governor-General by proclamation to any other area in Natal after a commission reported on the expediency of such action.

The Minister later introduced in the Senate the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Bill.

Speaking during the debate Senator *H. M. Basner* (Native Representative) said that the Bill was not only an unfair measure but a symptom of a diseased social order which sought to solve all difficulties by appeasing the man who had power at the expense of the man without power and wealth. He asserted that public opinion as reflected in newspapers, including one Durban newspaper, was against the Bill.

Senator *G. Hartog* said he hoped that "pegging" would lead to voluntary separation but, if it did not, he hoped a policy of separation would be enforced.

Minister's Reply

The Minister of the Interior, Mr. *Lawrence*, replying to the debate said that with the exception of Mr. *Brookes* and Mr. *Basner*, the Bill had received the blessing of the Senate. He said that the Government of India, in making representa-

tions about the Bill, was not acting against constitutional practice nor against precedent. The problem in Durban was not merely one of adequate housing facilities for the Indian community. If it had been so, one would not have expected to find Indians purchasing in European areas premises they did not occupy. There was undoubtedly a serious shortage of housing for the Indian community, but this was not the sole cause of penetration.

As evidence of the Government's *bonafides*, a provision had been inserted in the Bill that the proclaimed area could be deproclaimed before three years expired and this placed the onus on the local authorities. If the Durban City Council provided proper housing facilities for all sections of the community, various racial groups would avail themselves of those facilities and there would be natural segregation. If this happened, it would be the duty of the Government to withdraw the legislation and place it in cold storage. He said this as his personal opinion. He hoped the Indian community in Natal would assist the Government in this standstill period. The Government was not animated by any anti-Asiatic feeling. The Government was anxious to help Indians. He hoped the Indian community would very carefully consider the matter before refusing to co-operate with the Government.

The Bill passed its third reading in the Senate on April 26 without discussion.

Dr. Khare's Statement in Assembly

Moving "that the position arising out of the pegging legislation in South Africa be taken into consideration", the Hon'ble Dr. N. B. Khare, Member for Indians Overseas, Government of India, said in the Central Assembly on July, 30:

Sir, in response to one of those periodic waves of anti-Asiatic prejudice which, from time to time, besmirches the name of South Africa and which the Union Government find difficult to resist, there has been recently enacted there the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act, usually known as the Pegging Bill. It has the two following effects:

(i) In the Transvaal, it extends for a further three years the provisions of the interim legislation enacted for the year in 1939 and extended for another two years in 1941, by which purchases of property by Indians in areas not already subject to other restrictions are prohibited without the special permission of the Minister.

(ii) In Natal, it prohibits Indians from purchasing property and Europeans from selling property to Indians in predominantly European areas in Durban without the Minister's permission and provides for the extension of similar provisions to other areas in Natal on sufficient cause being shown after enquiry. There have been hitherto no statutory restrictions upon the acquisition of land by Asiatics in Natal, though provision exists for the insertion of an anti-Asiatic clause in title deeds.

History of Indian Emigration

Indian emigration to Natal began in 1860 upon the request of European planters through the Governor. Reports reached India that the emigrants were ill-treated, and Indian emigration declined to such an extent that planters continued to complain of a shortage of labour. An enquiry held in the colony revealed that the reports were well-founded; apart from other ill-treatment, wages were habitually held in arrears and in many cases not paid at all.

Emigration to Natal was stopped by the Government of India in 1866. It was reopened in 1874 on the enactment of measures by the Natal Government which provided that the indentured labourer, on the expiry of his indenture, might commute his return passage to India to a parcel of land for free settlement.

European fears of Indian expansion in Natal expressed themselves as early as 1880, and in 1887 a Commission appointed by the Natal Government reported that "the majority of the white colonists are strongly opposed to the presence of the 'free' Indian as a rival and competitor either in agricultural or commercial pursuits. As a result of pressure by the white colonists the enactments providing for free settlement of ex-indentured labourers were repealed.

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's Note

In 1894, the Natal Parliament passed a measure depriving Indians of the parliamentary franchise. Mr Joseph Chamberlain, in refusing to recommend the Bill for Royal Assent, said, "The Bill involves in a common disability all natives of India without exception and provides no machinery by which an Indian can free himself from this disability, whatever his intelligence, his education, or his status in the country. To assent to this measure would be to put an affront on people of India such as no British Parliament could be a party to.

And in speaking to the Colonial Conference in 1897, Mr. *Chamberlain* said, "We ask you also to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which makes no distinction in favour of, or against, race or colour, and to exclude by reason of their colour or by reason of their race all Her Majesty's Indian subjects or even all Asiatics would be an act so offensive to those people that it would be most painful, I am quite certain, to Her Majesty to have to sanction it."

Her Majesty's potential suffering appears to have caused little concern to many of the white colonists in Natal who struck by their policy of using Indians for their own enrichment while denying them ordinary human rights and privileges, comparable to the policy of the snake in the fable, which lets the rat make a hole and then occupies it itself. Some, however, saw the inequity of such a policy.

Indian Labour's Contribution

In 1907, a Commission in the colony reported that 'absolute and conclusive proof has been put forth before the Commission that several industries owe their existence and present condition entirely to indentured labour. The Indians are industrious, law-abiding and on the whole sober in their habits and it has been proved that their presence has had no injurious effect on the morals of the 'whites' or the 'natives'.

In 1908, Sir *Liege Hulett*, speaking in the Natal Parliament, said: "The condition of the colony before the importation of Indian labour was one of gloom, it was one that then and there threatened to extinguish the vitality of the country, and it was only by the Government assisting the importation of labour that the country began at once to revive.

The coast has been turned into one of the most prosperous parts of South Africa."

There were those in England, too, who felt themselves compelled to voice their disapproval of the Natal policy.

In 1908, Lord Curzon said, "In the first place, as regards South Africa itself, the Indian 'coolie', or at any rate the educated man who is behind the Indian 'coolie' and who has conducted this agitation, sees that the coolie or the artisan is invited and even encouraged to emigrate from India. We send him to a colony which he enriches by his labour and then the society there appears to turn round upon him as if he were a pariah dog. He is penalised there not for his vices but for his virtues. It is because he is a sober, industrious, frugal and saving man that he is such a formidable economic danger; and then the Indian remembers that at any rate in a large number of cases he has fought for the British Empire in South Africa and that it was largely owing to his efforts that Natal was saved."

"Insolent Injustice"

In the Transvaal, the Provincial Government was always in favour of a declared policy of segregation. By a law of 1885, amended in 1887, Asiatics were forbidden to live except in such areas and locations as may be set aside for them on sanitary grounds.

This law and its interpretation was the subject of much controversy between His Majesty's Government and the Republican Government, a controversy which was reflected in a speech by Lord *Lansdowne*, Secretary of State for War and an ex-Viceroy of India, who stated a few weeks after the outbreak of the Boer War that of all the misdeeds of the Boers none filled him with so much anger as their treatment of British Indians and proceeded to paint a lurid picture of the political evils which might have been expected to follow in India itself if England had failed to put an end to such insolent injustice.

After the Boer War, the Transvaal became a Crown Colony. In 1902 and again in 1904, the Governor, Lord Milner, put forward proposals for the registration of Asiatics. In 1902, Mr. *Joseph Chamberlain* rejected the proposal and said that it would be impossible to defend what would practically be a continuance of the South African Republic against which Her Majesty's Government had so strongly and repeatedly protested.

What Lord Morley Said

It is an irony of fate that the self-same insolent injustice as described by Lord *Lansdowne* is being perpetrated even to-day on the defenceless South African Indians by the British and the Boer combining into a double-barrelled gun for the annihilation of Indian interests in South Africa.

In 1904, Mr. *Lyttleton*, while agreeing to the introduction of an Immigration Ordinance to restrict the entry of Indians in the future by applying a dictation test

in a European language, refused to sanction legislation taking away rights for which Indians had contended in republican days and which had subsequently been assured to them. European opinion in the Transvaal was, however, by all means satisfied and continued efforts were made to impose further restrictions upon Asiatics. In speaking of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1907, which incidentally gave rise to Mr. Gandhi's first passive resistance movement in South Africa, Lord Morley said, "The Act may work grave injustice since British Indian subjects who had before 1902 acquired domicile in the Transvaal but having temporarily left the Colony, had not registered themselves, may under its provision be debarred from re-entry."

Townships Act And Gold Law

In 1908 the Townships Act and the Gold Law, which consolidated the position regarding occupation and ownership in proclaimed land and contained stringent provisions against Asiatics and 'coloured persons,' were passed.

In 1910, the Union of South Africa was established and from that date forward, matters affecting Indians became a Union Government responsibility, though the laws of the constituent parts of the Union remained in force. In 1913 an Immigration Bill was introduced and passed which was the cause of Mr. Gandhi's second and more spectacular passive resistance campaign.

It was in relation to this legislation that the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, speaking in Madras, said, "Recently your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust—an opinion which we who watch their struggle from afar cannot but share. They have violated, as they intended to violate, those laws, with full knowledge of the penalties involved and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India deep and burning—and not only of India, but of all those who like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country."

Gandhi-Smuts Agreement

In 1914, Mr. Gandhi came to terms with General Smuts and the passive resistance movement ended, but under the Immigration Act all Indians were, by an order of the Minister, deemed undesirable and consequently became prohibited immigrants. At the Imperial War Conference in 1917 and 1918, General Smuts said, "Once the white community in South Africa were rid of the fear that they were going to be flooded by unlimited immigration from India, all the other questions would be considered subsidiary and would become easily and perfectly soluble; the fear, which formerly obsessed the settlers there, has been removed; the great principle of restricting immigration for which they have contended is on our Statute Book. Mr. Burton, speaking on behalf of South Africa, said, "It is only fair to say, and it is the truth that we have found that the Indians in our midst in South Africa who form in some parts a very substantial portion of the population are good, law-abiding, quiet citizens and it is only our duty to see that they are treated as human beings with feelings like our own and in a proper manner."

Gen. Smuts' Tribute To Indian Troops

Speaking elsewhere of the troops who had served under him, Gen. Smuts said, "I wish here publicly to repeat that I have had no more loyal, devoted and brave troops under me than those troops from the Indian Empire and I think the young South Africans who went with me, who fought side by side with those heroes from Asia to-day have more kindly feelings than they had before towards the Indian population of South Africa." These sentiments apparently have now gone with the wind!

Feelings, however, were not so easily mollified and as a result of pressure by the Government of India and the Secretary of State a Commission was set up in 1920 to consider the question of Indian trading and property rights. This Commission, in recommending against 'compulsory segregation of Asiatics' said, "We find ourselves wholly unable to support the policy of repression which was advocated by some of the witnesses. Indiscriminate segregation of Asiatics in locations and similar restrictive measures would result in eventually reducing them to helotry. Such measures, apart from their injustice and inhumanity, would degrade the Asiatic and react upon the European."

The Capetown Agreement

The Union Government, nevertheless, willingly or unwillingly, found the pressure of European opinion too strong, and in 1925 General Hertzog's Government introduced the Areas Reservation Bill. Dr. Malan, introducing the Bill, said that the measure frankly started from the general supposition that the Indian was an alien element in the South African population and that no solution of the

question would be acceptable to the country unless it resulted in a very considerable reduction of the Indian population. As the result of representations from the Government of India the Bill was postponed and in 1926 the Round Table Conference was held in Capetown which finally concluded the Capetown Agreement.

It was in regard to this legislation that the Viceroy, Lord Reading, said at the opening of the Legislative Assembly in 1927 that it appeared to contain a radically objectionable principle. Lord Oliver, speaking in the House of Lords in 1926 on the same subject, said, "That is more than pressure, it is oppression. It is not to be wondered at, when Indians in India see their relatives exposed to this oppression that they become restive and ask 'What is the use of our belonging to an Empire which guarantees to protect us if, again and again, the promises that have been made in the name of that Empire to our kinsmen are not to be maintained and these kinsmen are to be subjected to oppression to induce them to relinquish the privileges that they have acquired?'" He added, "I have stated that Lord Reading's opinion and certainly the opinion of anyone connected with the India office, is that these oppressive enactments are a distinct infraction of the rights of Indians which His Majesty's Government are bound to honour, to maintain and safeguard." He pleaded "Let us have some kind of moratorium from the continued pressure upon them (the rights of Indians in South Africa) which is being exercised to the great disturbance of our own Imperial relations with India."

The foregoing shows clearly enough how from the earliest days of Indian immigration into Natal the White population of South Africa has been guided by no other motive but gross self-interest. When times were bad they did not hesitate to implore India to help them and were ready to make any promises to get the labour they so sorely needed. But when times improved they were eager to repudiate their promises and to invoke any means at their disposal to oppress and insult the very people who had come to their assistance.

His Majesty's Government and many prominent British statesmen have consistently protested and striven against the South African attitude, but as time has gone on their protests, their efforts have become weaker and of less avail. By passes, licences, registration, taxes, trusts and reservations regarding property and trading and by denying the elementary right of the franchise to people born and bred in their country, the White Government in South Africa have done their utmost to humiliate and hedge in their Indian population. To this has been added social and public indignity of many kinds: refusal of entry to shops, hotels, places of amusement, restrictions on the use of public conveyances, separate counters at post offices and similar degradation.

A man of such robust commonsense as the present Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, writing of the Indians in Kenya, said, "Is it possible for any Government with a scrap of self-respect for honest dealing between man and man to embark upon a policy of deliberately squeezing out the natives of India from regions in which he has established himself under every security of public faith?" That sentiment, so forcibly expressed, applies with equal pertinence to the history of Indians in South Africa.

And yet, at a time when Indian troops have given their lives in countless gallant actions on African soil and are ready for further sacrifices in the same cause for which South Africa is fighting, at a time too when that same great man, Winston Churchill, is leading all the peoples of the Commonwealth in the sternest struggle that has yet been seen, all those noble sentiments are forgotten, all those high principles enunciated by former British Ministers and statesmen are ignored and the last indignity is imposed upon the Indian people by the latest so-called "Pegging" legislation in South Africa.

It is worthy of note that the Union Government's action has the support of Dr. Malan whose followers, constituting some 40 per cent of the White population, stand openly for secession from the Empire and neutrality in the war.

It may be that Field Marshal Smuts has accepted this position only for the purpose of the general election, but India can derive little satisfaction from such a reflection. The original Interim Act prohibiting Indian purchases of property in the Transvaal was passed in 1939 for two years only, to tide over a difficult period. It was extended in 1941 for another two years and has now been again extended for three years. It is small wonder if Indians regard the recent enactment as designed to be a permanent measure. Nor should undue weight be attached to apparent disunity among the Indians in South Africa. There is disunity among the Europeans, too, between the seceders and the non-seceders, but on this issue they are at one. So too are the Indians, whose differences arise from other sources.

The crux of the situation is that South Africa prevails because she is a Dominion and Indians there have to suffer because India is a dependency. Under the circumstances the normal responsibility of Britain which is the trustee of India is very great. She cannot ignore that she owes a duty just as great to the dusky millions in India and the quarter million in South Africa as she owes to the whole people of her own race in any territory in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The constitutional drawback from which India suffers does not detract from the inherent justice of the case of Indians in South Africa and some means must be found for maintaining the dignity and prestige of India, and of the Government of India, even in wartime. It should not be forgotten that the Union Government's action is an affront to the Government of India as well as to Indian sentiment.

Fortunately in this matter the people of India and the Government of India are at one, and the Government of India have already publicly characterised the recent legislation as repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune.

Had India been independent she would have considered this a *casus belli* against South Africa. But we may not think lightly of breaking away from the British Commonwealth of Nations because the ideal of co-operative interdependence on a footing of equality is better than the ideal of isolated independence.

There may also be a forlorn hope of representations yielding valuable results after the election fever in South Africa has cooled down. But representation unbacked by any action is valueless. As for action an amended Reciprocity Act is already before the House for consideration and the possibility of applying other feasible and proper measures is being carefully examined.

The Correspondence

Here is a summary of the telegraphic correspondence between the Government of India and the South African Government given by the Hon. Dr. Khare in the Central Assembly on July 30, 1943.

March 16, 1943 :—High Commissioner's telegram dated 13-3-43 intimating (i) Union Government's intention of "Pegging" position in Durban or in Natal pending receipt of Mr. Broome's report and the enactment of legislation on certain lines and (ii) also of renewing the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal) Restriction Act of 1939 for a further period of two years. Though it was known that Mr. Broome was conducting his second enquiry into Indian penetration, this was the first intimation regarding the pegging legislation and the Minister had still not made up his mind.

March 25 :—Asked High Commissioner to represent to the Union Government that the Government of India maintained objection to statutory segregation and that pending receipt of Mr. Broome's report, any action by them would prejudice issue and advised him to adopt same attitude.

March 27 :—Informed High Commissioner that press reports here referred to European demand for immediate legislation and the Minister's threat to Indians of legislation with retrospective effect and asked for full information.

March 27 :—High Commissioner's telegram dated March 26 intimating that he had conveyed the Government of India's objection to Statutory legislation.

March 28 :—Telegraphically instructed High Commissioner to secure an assurance that Government of India would be given an opportunity to comment. The High Commissioner sent on this request to the Union Government on March 30, but it was ignored.

March 29 :—High Commissioner intimated that the Minister had made the speech on March 22, in which he explained that Government's attitude was to await the Broome Report but that if, as anticipated, legislation was found necessary, it would have retrospective effect from March 22. On March 26 this was debated in the Union Assembly. Anti-Asiatic speeches were made by European members and the Minister stated that the problem was not merely of penetration into European areas but also of proper housing for Indian Community and that the Union Government was anxious to avoid offending the susceptibilities of the Government of India which has played so vital a part in the war effort.

March 31 :—High Commissioner telegraphed summary of Broome's report.

April 4 :—High Commissioner intimated that Field Marshal *Smuts* was very perturbed by extent of penetration disclosed in Broome Report and desired immediate legislation.

April 7 :—The Union Government publicly announced their intention to late and to introduce a bill on 10-4-43. Draft of Bill handed by Minister to Commissioner.

April 8.—Press communique issued by the Government of India expressing regret that the Union Government had not given them an opportunity to comment and had also paid no attention to their representation for the non-extension of the Interim Act in the Transvaal.

April 8.—Telegraphic second representation to the Union Government through the High Commissioner pointing out inadvisability of undertaking proposed legislation in war conditions particularly in view of their assurance to Sir B. Rama Rao in October, 1939, that no legislative action on racial lines would be taken for the duration of the war. Strong objection to statutory segregation was reiterated and a suggestion was made that solution by voluntary restriction of purchases of property be explored.

April 8.—Telegram to Secretary of State telling him that the Union Govt. had not replied to the Govt. of India's representations and also informing him that reactions of proposed legislation in India would be serious and unhappy.

April 8.—Press Conference held to explain the position.

April 10.—The Government of India's protest handed over to the Secretary, External Affairs, by Mr. D. I. R. Muir at 6 p.m. on April 9, and verbal request made that the Prime Minister may withdraw Bill from next morning's order paper and to reconsider position.

April 10.—Bill introduced in the Assembly; second reading being for April 14.

April 11.—High Commissioner telegraphed Union Government's reply to our second representation. Union Government stated that hopes expressed in 1939 that the position regarding Indian penetration would be maintained or, at any rate, would not further deteriorate had not been realised as shown by Broome's report and that this had compelled them to legislate as otherwise there was fear of racial feelings.

April 12.—High Commissioner telegraphed how Union Government's reply was unsatisfactory and gave no reasons why the Government of India were not informed of their intention to legislate.

April 13.—Third protest to the Union Government through the High Commissioner. It stated: (i) Issues involved were of high importance to relations between the two countries during war as also in the post-war period so as to call for utmost efforts by both Governments to avert danger of a lasting breach. (ii) Existing licensing laws in the Transvaal operated as an effective barrier against Indian occupation of trading sites and that in view of the first Broome Report and the subsequent statistics there was no justification for continuing the Interim Act. (iii) Suggested as a practical compromise that pending report of proposed Commission to examine housing and other civic needs of Indians, all intended transfer of land between Europeans and Asiatics should be subject to prior publication before confirmation and administrative arrangements should be made for the hearing of any objections by a joint committee or by an impartial judicial committee.

April 14.—Third protest handed over to Field Marshal Smuts. (Copy to Mr. Lawrence). Second reading of the Bill.

April 21.—High Commissioner telegraphed his own proposals for non-statutory solution, viz., *status quo* regarding purchase of property but acceptance of principle of zoning in regard to actual occupation and appointment of a commission.

April 21.—Last suggestion made by the Govt. of India was that provision be made in Bill empowering Governor-General to bring it into force when he thinks fit. In the meantime suggested machinery in our third representation be put into force. This was handed over to Secretary, External Affairs, on April 22, while second reading debate was on in the Senate.

April 21.—Second reading of Bill passed.

April 22.—High Commr. informed that he could put forward his proposals.

April 25.—Union Govt's reply to the Government of India's third protest received. They found alternative suggestions unacceptable and were convinced that no action short of that envisaged by the Bill would either produce breathing space or atmosphere necessary to enable a permanent solution of problems to be found. They also said that by the Capetown Agreement or by their decision not to proceed with legislation contemplated in 1926, Union Govt. did not in any way surrender their freedom to deal legislatively with Indian problems in future.

April 26.—Bill passed third reading.

April 27.—Press Communique issued by the Govt. of India expressing disappointment over Union Government's failure to adopt Govt. of India's suggestions and stating that the legislation was repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune.

The British Labour Party Conference

Discussion on Indian Policy

After a speech by Mr. *Reginald Sorensen*, Member of Parliament, urging Government to make another offer to India, or at least reopen negotiations, Mr. *Arthur Greenwood* at the British Labour Party Conference held on the 18th. June 1948. persuaded the backers of the two resolutions to withdraw them on a pledge that the Party Executive would immediately open new discussions on the Indian policy.

Mr. *Sorensen*, who is Secretary of the Indian League Parliamentary Committee, was moving the resolution on behalf of his own constituency Labour Party (Leyton) and three other divisional parties urging Government "to recognise the increasing urgency of a settlement with India and take the initiative in negotiating with the Indian national leaders on the basis of recognition of India's independence and formation of a Provisional Government of Indian national unity under an Indian Prime Minister."

Mr. *Sorensen* said: "Although undoubtedly communal differences do exist in India, it is my conviction that the Cripps offer did not fail primarily through any communal differences. I would urge the Conference once more to press on Government to make another offer to India, or at least open negotiations with India. I express profound regret that Government has not enabled Congress leaders who, Mr. *Amery*, himself admitted were leaders of great and important parties to be in contact with non-Congress leaders like Mr. *Rajagopalachari* and Sir *Tej Bahadur Sapru*. "Why cannot we allow these Indian patriots to be in contact with other Indians."

Describing the white paper as "tendentious and misleading" he referred to 60,000 Indians in prison.

Mr. *Sorensen* emphasised that the Labour Party's affirmation that the Indian people were entitled to self-determination and self-government did not mean necessarily that the British should determine what form of Government Indians should choose. "In the last resort, if independence and self-government mean anything at all, the decision as to the kind of Government that shall exist in India must be made by politically conscious India itself, even though that may mean severance from ourselves. I hope it will not. I hope India will freely co-operate with this country, with China and with other Eastern peoples. But it is her choice. Although we may sometimes think, that Indians have chosen wrongly or acted unwisely, it is only their judgment. Just as we would not dream of laying down for other democratic peoples what particular form of democracy they must implement in their legislatures so we should recognise the same fact regarding India."

Delegates' Protests

Amid protests from a number of delegates against the Executive's suggestions owing to lack of time in the closing hours of the conference, there should be no further discussion, Mr. *Arthur Greenwood* suggested that the resolutions should be withdrawn on "my definite undertaking that we shall go to the Joint Committee in the near future to discuss the matter in the light of the Executive Committee's report." On this plea both the resolutions were thereupon withdrawn.

The second motion in the name of St. Pancras (London) and Kins Norton (Birmingham) Divisional parties urged "immediate re-opening of negotiations with bodies truly representative of the major communities of the population of India" and declared: "A democratic solution of the Indian problem can be found in the formula of self-determination based on freedom from racial, religious, caste and class domination."

The Executive's report on India (which was among the section of general report passed by the conference on Friday night 'en bloc' without discussion because of pressure of time) stated that the Joint Committee on India (consisting of the India Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the International Sub-committee of the National Executive had continued their study of the constitutional Indian problem and of the rejection of the Cripps proposal. It quoted the declaration issued on August 12 last by the Party Executive and the Trades Union Congress General Council deprecating the civil disobedience movement and urging Government to make clear that on the abandonment of civil disobedience it would be ready to resume discussions with a view to safe-guarding and implementing the principles of Indian self-government.

The Educational Progress in India 1943

The Indian Science Congress

Thirtieth Session—Calcutta—2nd. January 1943

A demand by an upcountry young man for reading out the address of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the President-elect, now in jail, marked the proceedings of the opening ceremony of the Thirtieth Session of the Indian Science Congress which commenced at Calcutta on the 2nd. January 1943 under the presidentship of Mr. D. N. Wadia, the out-going President.

After Dr. B. C. Roy, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and Chairman of the local Reception Committee, had concluded reading his welcome address, the young man (mentioned above) with a portrait of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, went to the dais. Placing the portrait on the dais, he prayed that Mr. Nehru's presidential address, which, he believed, was in possession of some people there, should be read out at the meeting.

Told by Dr. S. K. Mitra, General Secretary of the Congress, that they had tried their best to secure Mr. Nehru's address, but could not succeed, the young man proposed that a resolution condemning the action of the Government in this matter should be passed at the session.

He was, however, persuaded by Dr. Roy to allow the proceedings to go on. But as soon as Mr. Wadia concluded his Presidential Address, he again stood up and reiterated his demand for passing a resolution condemning the action of the Government.

Dr. Roy suggested to him that a resolution of that type should first be placed before and considered by the General Committee of the Congress which would meet on January 4, whereupon the young man followed by some other young men left the hall as a protest.

DR. B. C. ROY'S SPEECH

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and Chairman of the local Reception Committee, inaugurating the Congress, said, "If it is the object of Science, as it originally was, to increase the comforts and security of man, then Science as originally conceived and developed cannot corrupt our morals. If Nature's gifts had been developed and perfected by man not for any higher purposes but to enable him to indulge in the blind orgy of destruction and devastation, the blame cannot be laid at the door of science or scientists. The sharp weapon, the knife of a surgeon was forged not to destroy the life of an individual but to save him from the ravage of a malignant affection; gun-powder was manufactured not to kill thousands of innocent lives but to provide a channel for drinking water to thirsty people on the other side of a hill, to provide a thoroughfare for the masses; the investigations into the properties of phosphorus were directed not to incorporate it in the preparation of bombs, but to provide a suitable and ready material for getting light."

About 100 delegates from various parts of the country attended.

MR. WADIA ON NEED FOR PLANNING

A plea for the adoption of a wise and justly planned international mineral policy framed by an International Directorate in order to preserve peace and goodwill among countries unequally endowed by nature with mineral wealth, was made by Mr. D. H. Wadia, Mineral Adviser to the Ceylon Government, in the course of his presidential address to the Congress, Mr. Wadia said :

"A distinguished citizen of India was to have presided at this meeting and no one here shares more keenly than I in the disappointment at his absence to-day. I seek your forbearance at my having to address you because of an existing rule which requires your President of the foregoing year to continue in Office until its assumption by his successor. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's contributions to Science in India have not been in the lime-light, but they have been a leavening influence in the organisation and working of the National Planning Committee which since 1939, is engaged in the great task of co-ordinating applied Science with productive industry in every field, industrial, educational, cultural and organisational. Ladies and Gentlemen, please believe me, I sympathise with you for having missed his rousing address."

Speaking about the importance of minerals in war, Mr. Wadia said that during the century and quarter between the Napoleonic Wars and the Hitlerian war, the consumption of minerals had been over a hundred-fold of that consumed during the entire history of man on earth, and so far as metals were concerned, man had used up between 1914 and today, between the two German wars, more metal than during any previous period of history. Stocks of tin, platinum, silver, gold, coal and mineral oils were getting depleted and so far no checks had been devised for this alarming depletion. "Metals and minerals are a rapidly wasting asset of a country for which there is no renewal or replacement. Agricultural and forest resources of a land can be rejuvenated by suitable measures and manures, but no fertiliser can revive one exhausted mine, for geological processes are exceedingly slow requiring hundreds of thousands of years to form a vein of metallic ore or a bed of coal" said Mr. Wadia.

METALLURGICAL INDUSTRY IN DEFENCE

"In the defence programme of a nation under the present day conditions of totalitarian warfare, the metallurgical industry and its ancillary mining of minerals yielding the ferrous and alloy metals, fluxes, refractories and accessory minerals are of essential importance. A significant feature of the distribution of these minerals is the concentration of their production and manufacture in a comparatively few countries in the world, happily nearly three-fourths of these being centred in, or controlled by, the United Nations as against the Axis group. Of the total annual mineral production of the world in pre-war years as much as 85 per cent came from North America and Western Europe, of these U. S. A., England and Germany and latterly Russia contributing over 75 per cent. This, however, does not mean that nature has endowed these countries to this unequal extent with valuable minerals; it is rather an index of the country's industrial and technical development and the energy of the people. Russia's three successive Five-Years Plans are an example of this. Industrial progress of other parts of the world may materially change this condition. For instance, India's resources in iron-ore are of a magnitude quite out of proportion to the bare couple of million tons of pig iron per year it has only recently begun to produce. Only in a few districts of Bihar and Eastern States Agency, the high-grade iron-ore reserves are calculated to be of the order of 4,000 million tons. Large reserves of aluminium-ore are still only potential assets. When these untouched reserves enter production stage, the apparent inequalities will diminish and the countries bordering the North Asiatic basin will not occupy the dominating position in strategic minerals they do at present."

POST-WAR MINERAL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Wadia observed that only the adoption of a wise and justly planned international mineral policy framed by an International Directorate could preserve peace and goodwill amongst countries unequally endowed by Nature with mineral wealth. Unequal geographical distribution of minerals being an unalterable fact, planned international economy should devise means not only to eliminate this cause of inter-country friction but to increase the interdependence of nations on each other for their vital trades and industrial needs and so make minerals a rallying point for international co-operation and goodwill. The preliminary recommendations of the Conference on "Mineral Resources and the Atlantic Character" convened by the British Association's Committee on Social and International Relations of Science last July, appear to be on the right lines, but they will not go far enough if their implications are meant to safeguard the interests of the British Empire only or even of the whole United Nations' group. These should embrace all the free countries and should call for sacrifice from all participating nations of part of their national and natural advantages for the ultimate benefit of all and the future security of the people of the world. The fourth article of the Atlantic Charter postulated access for all States on equal terms to the raw materials of the world. But if the Atlantic Charter did not unreservedly provide for all peace-loving nations of the earth, whatever oceans bound them, its fulfilment in partial degree would not achieve the goal of post-war mineral allocation, nor succeed in removing a focal infection point in the body politic of the world.

INDIA'S GREAT RESOURCES

Mr. Wadia, proceeding, said: "The mineral outlook of the Indian region is on the whole satisfactory both for war and peace-time requirements. India's resources in minerals of strategic importance, minerals for munitions and defence armaments, base metals, alloys, fluxes, refractories and accessory minerals can be regarded as

adequate, in several but not all of them. India is deficient in tin, tungsten, lead, zinc, nickel, graphite and liquid fuels. But in the basic metals, iron, manganese, aluminium and chromium, the country is well supplied, in the case of the former three, in large excess. Our neighbour, Burma, has abundant stocks of the munition metals of which India is in deficit, while her oil resources must yet be regarded as considerable. Ceylon has reserves of the world's finest graphite, a mineral indispensable in metallurgy and of a magnitude sufficient to last a long period. Ancillary minerals such as asbestos, cements, fertilisers, clays, mica, sulphur, various salts, ores and other minerals of industrial utility are available in quantities sufficient for the country's needs, while some are in exportable surpluses. The experience of the last three years' war effort in the production in India of a wide range of munitions without any previous apprenticeship, is satisfactory proof of the country's adequacy in some respects, though still unequipped in a number of essentials, viz., specialised steels, machine tools, manufacture of aircraft, high explosives, automobile engines, big ship construction, etc., on a scale commensurate with her internal requirements."

SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF SCIENCE

Dealing with the position of science *vis-a-vis* the public, Mr. Wadia said that the awakening to the social obligations of science is of recent date and, even in Europe and America, this aspect of the cultivation of science was for long not realised and left to sporadic individual efforts. With this awakening, a two-fold problem faces science all over the world to-day—to press the newest discoveries and inventions of applied science into the service of agriculture, manufactories, hospitals, homes and schools and along-side with it to so control the impact of these on his private life that his mechanised work-a-day life may not be totally divested of all higher spiritual values. Our future national life and its material well-being largely depend on a wholesome balance being maintained between these two—the impulse to harness science to increase physical comforts of life and a restraining desire to preserve the old-world spiritual calm and simplicity of living. Happily for India, this balancing is somewhat of a natural hereditary trait and does not need much emphasis. India's late start in the application of science to industry also gives it an opportunity of planning along right lines. The significance of this problem has been realised by both our political leaders, as well as scientists, and some progress is made in this direction.

Here Mr. Wadia referred to the work of the National Planning Committee which through its 29 sub-committees had set out on formulating a programme covering many phases of the country's future life and activities, material, productive, educational, artistic. Their work unfortunately is in a great measure suspended to-day, though some of the 29 sub-committees have furnished more or less complete, well-documented reports, while others have submitted interim fact-finding reports. Their conclusions, doubtless will be subjected to thorough revision and deliberation by the main body which comprises 200 of the leading industrialists, publicists and scientists of the country, before they are offered to the public, but a great deal of spade work is accomplished, a valuable mass of ascertained classified details collected and many blue-prints prepared. A planned reconstruction in a greater or less measure of India's commerce, industry, finance, land, labour, mining, transport, power-generation, technology alongside educational, cultural and social re-organisation is expected to emerge from the labours of this body."

PROPOSED ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Mr. Wadia then referred to the proposal before the Executive Committee of the Indian Science Congress for the institution of a national Academy of Social Sciences drawn up by the Sub-Committee on Science and Social Relations. "The proposed Academy," he said, "should be a body of high academic standing and professional knowledge, which can take up long range problems of social well-being of the people of India which the older Societies and Associations established along familiar but too general lines in some cases and rather over-specialised lines in others cannot deal with without suspicion of religious or political bias. Dr. K. Motwani, the Secretary of the Sub-Committee, personally placed the scheme before Pandit Nehru last July and, in accordance with Pandit Nehru's wishes, the Executive Committee proposes to appoint a Committee of Experts to suggest ways and means of bringing this Academy of Social Sciences into being. The matter rests here. It is too early to outline the exact task to which the Academy will address itself. Its chief function will be to explore those avenues through which the contributions of science may be adapted to the life of the individual and

the nation without allowing any anti-social applications of science such as have made a shambles of so many countries ever raising their heads in our midst. Secondly, the Academy should emphasise an integrated, synthetic approach to every problem, pressing into service the contributions of various basic social sciences such as human geography, anthropology, psychology, economics, political science, philosophy and sociology. The bringing into being of a National Academy so constituted may well become a crowning achievement of the Indian Science Congress."

Geology & Geography Section

The common statement that India was poor in mineral resources was refuted by Dr. J. A. Dunn, Superintending Geologist, Geological Survey of India, presiding at the Geology and Geography Section of the Indian Science Congress held on the 3rd. January 1943.

Dr. Dunn remarked that although not so rich in economic minerals as the U. S. A., this country was by no means deficient. "India is, indeed, the world's dominant source of at least two minerals, Mica and Ilmenite. It shares with Russia in being the world's main producer of Manganese, and is possessed of perhaps the world's largest reserves of high grade iron-ore. In addition, there are adequate resources available of many other minerals." No country was completely self-sufficient in mineral raw materials : India's shortcomings comprised particularly tin, nickel, and molybdenum.

The speaker outlined the distribution of minerals in India and drew attention to the concentration of wealth in Bihar, which in normal times produced about 40 per cent of India's total mineral output. He urged that the provincial distribution of minerals should receive profound study whenever partitioning was under consideration. The greatest expansion, according to him, was likely to be in the further treatment and utilisation of their mineral resources within the country. At least, four of their minerals—Mica, Manganese-ore, Ilmenite, and Monazite—were of great importance to the world's industries, but to date almost their entire production had been exported in the unmanufactured state. Dr. Dunn emphasised that these minerals must continue to be exported, but it was eminently desirable that much of the manufacturing processes through which they eventually passed, should be completed in India before export.

Dr. Dunn pointed out that as India expanded industrially her minerals would find an ever widening application. In this connection, he stressed the need of a Minerals Research Bureau to undertake investigations into all aspects of the mineral industry.

Concluding, the speaker remarked that if this country was to take its place amongst the nations of the world, it would be necessary to conform to whatever general scheme of international mineral policy might emerge in the post-war settlement.

Mathematics & Statistics Section

Certain developments in Mathematics in the last thirty years were referred to by Dr. S. C. Dhar, Head of the Department of Mathematics, College of Science, Nagpur University, in his presidential address at the Mathematics and Statistics section of the Indian Science Congress on the 3rd. January.

The role that mathematics had played in the last 150 years, said Dr. Dhar, was firstly to suggest various methods to tackle problems that presented themselves for solution. On the one hand, the development of the physical sciences presented various problems for the mathematicians' ingenuity, while, on the other hand, they themselves forged methods in the shape of new branches of mathematics which the physicists took advantage of in unravelling the mysteries of Nature.

Describing the situation, Dr. Dhar said : "The mathematicians play a game in which they themselves invent rules, while the physicists play a game in which the rules are provided by Nature. But as time goes on, it becomes increasingly evident, that the rules the mathematicians find are the same as those which Nature has chosen."

Referring to the reaction which the new technique had on Pure Mathematics, the speaker said that it gave a stimulus to investigation which also enriched Pure Mathematics. He discussed in detail the controversies that were raised by Fourier's Analysis, which was developed for solving the problems of the conduction of heat in an isotropic solid, as also the method which Heaviside introduced in the resolution of transient electrical problems. This method met with utmost opposition from pure mathematicians, especially of the Cambridge School, who

refused to recognise it as a legitimate method in the solution of differential equation of mathematical physics. Dr. *Dhar* expressed the opinion that Heaviside's Operational Methods represented a distinct and epoch-making advance.

Nehru to continue as President

Mr. *Jawaharlal Nehru* will continue as President-elect of the next session of the Indian Science Congress. This announcement was made at the meeting of the General Committee of the Indian Science Congress Association held on the 4th. January 1948.

If the Executive Committee of the Association does not receive any information by 1st July, 1943, regarding the services of Pandit *Jawaharlal* being available, Professor *S. N. Bose*, Head of the Department of Physics, University of Dacca, will be appointed President of the 31st session.

The General Committee of the Association also adopted a resolution moved from the chair, recording the deep sense of disappointment of the Committee at the enforced absence of Mr. *Nehru*, who had been elected to preside over the 30th session of the Science Congress and regretting that it had not been possible to secure his presidential address for the occasion.

The next session of the Science Congress will be held at Trivandrum under the auspices of the University of Travancore.

Botany Section

Presiding over the Botany section on the 4th. January, Dr. *K. Biswas*, Superintendent of the Royal Botanical Garden, Calcutta, said that it was time that there was more intensive work in Systematic Botany in India. Apart from the little floristic investigation done in some parts of India, there still existed vast unexplored and insufficiently explored regions. Provinces which had already been explored, also needed further detailed investigation with regard to herbaceous and shrubby vegetation which had failed to receive due attention. He suggested that the Botanic Survey of India should be revived from its moribund condition and that the vast vegetable resources of the country should be properly worked out for the benefit of the country. There was undoubtedly a bright future for the Systematists and Taxonomists of India.

Archaeology Section

The session of the Anthropology and Archaeology section was presided over by Dr. *Chakravarti*. In his address, Dr. *Chakravarti* gave an outline of the excavations at Ramnagar, the site of the ancient Ahichchhatra, and of the exploration tour arranged by the Archaeological Department in the Sabarmati Valley and of another conducted by Sir *Aurel Stein* along the dry bed of the Ghaggar.

Dr. *Chakravarti* also stressed the value of epigraphy in the study of Anthropology and traced the evolution of writing from the earliest times.

Agricultural Section

Rao Bahadur *Y. Ramachandra Rao*, in his presidential address to the Agricultural & Entomology Section, stressed the need for planning on an All-India basis in certain aspects of Agricultural Entomology. Entomological workers employed in the different provinces of India would be quite capable of studying and controlling such pests as had a local origin within their jurisdiction ; but, he pointed out, they would be very much handicapped if they were called upon to deal with pests that invaded their province from outside. Locusts, for instance, and certain equally destructive moths had the habit of migrating long distances. Evidently, in the case of such insects, a central agency with powers of jurisdiction over more than one province was needed to study their movements and warn provinces liable to attack. There were other pests like the Deccan Grasshopper which, though not migratory like locusts, were capable of periodically spreading in a destructive form over large areas in several contiguous provinces and should also be studied with a wide perspective.

The Political Science Congress

Fifth Session—Agra—2nd January 1943

Presidential Address

"We are meeting at a most critical juncture in the history of this country—when, on the one hand, there is still going on a movement for the establishment immediately of Indian Independence, and on the other, there is a fixed determination to partition the country and establish separate and independent Muslim States, both in the West and the East. It is true that the fear of attack on the country is very much less than a few months ago and the war situation has definitely taken a turn for the better—but who can say how long this inhuman butchery shall continue or what tremendous sacrifices it shall still entail? Already the cost of living has risen very high—in many parts of the country, even articles of necessity cannot be obtained or obtained with great difficulty and at prohibitive prices, thus inflicting terrible hardships particularly on the poorer classes and persons with small, fixed incomes. At such a juncture what is the duty of the Indian Political Science Association and its President? With due humility I express the hope that it may be given to this fifth Conference of the Association to make a constructive contribution towards the solution of the Indian constitutional problem and towards the ending of the present political impasse," said *Gurumukh Nihal Singh*, in the course of his Presidential address to the fifth session of the Political Science Congress, held at Agra on the 2nd January 1943.

After describing the growth of communalism in India, the speaker continued :

"I regard the conclusion of the Lucknow Pact of 1916 as an important turning point in the history of the Indian National movement. The magnitude of the blunder committed has never been realised and its praises have been sung on account of the results achieved during the next few years.

"The Indian National movement started with certain initial disadvantages which it was not able to overcome when this great danger overtook it. The fact that the Muslims sulked and did not take advantage of English education till the seventies of the last century was responsible for the leadership of the nationalist movement falling into Hindu hands and the separatist action of *Sir Syed Ahmed* completed the process of throwing the Congress into the hands of Hindu nationalists—some of whom were orthodox Hindus and the mainspring of whose action came from Hindu revivalism. The result was that the nationalist movement could not evolve a common source of inspiration of a common national language or a ritual, anthem and symbols which could make an equal appeal to all sections of the people. Again, for the sake of outward unity social reform was eschewed. The Indian nationalist talked of liberty, equality, brotherhood and love for his Motherland but did not acquire a liberal outlook in social matters or a secular or territorial conception of law and politics. Inter-marriages, inter-dining, discarding of untouchability, giving up conceptions of personal, local and communal law which would have created the proper atmosphere for the growth of a truly nationalistic sentiment and made the fusion of communities possible, were not made part and parcel of a nationalist programme.

BALKANISATION OF INDIA

On the other hand to keep up outward unity on the political platform exclusivism and communal loyalties were respected and protected. The inevitable result was the stereotyping and perpetuation of divisions in Indian society which the clever British bureaucracy utilised for imperial purposes. In 1919, in spite of a whole-hearted and a thorough condemnation of communal electorates by the joint authors of the reforms and their determination not to allow them except to the Muslims, where they were in a minority, and to the Sikhs in the Punjab, they were extended to the Muslims everywhere, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Europeans, Anglo-Indians and reservation of seats in plural-member constituencies to the non-Brahmins and the Mahrattas. Provision was made for the representation of the depressed classes and labour by nomination and also for the special representation of landlords and other interests. The process of balkanising India was pushed still further by the Communal Award of 1932, embodied in the Reforms of 1935.

The elections of 1936 showed the strong hold the Indian National Congress had on the general public mind and it made Mr. *Jinnah* and other leaders of the Mussalmans realise that unless they reorganised and closed up their ranks and came under the banner of one political body and chalked out a programme that would make an appeal, not only to the educated few—aspirants after seats, jobs and ministerships—but also to the Muslim masses to whom franchise had been

extended recently, the chief purpose of separate electorates may be defeated and the Congress may succeed in winning over the Muslim masses through its economic programme and the policy of Muslim mass contacts. In my opinion it was this fear that was largely responsible for the enunciation and the working out of the two nations' theory.

ORIGIN OF TWO NATIONS THEORY

What are the causes for this change of attitude on the part of Mr. Jinnah and the All-India Muslim League?

The first cause is, as I have stated above, the need for an effective popular slogan, to rally the Muslim masses, which became an urgent necessity with the extension of the franchise and starting of the "Muslim Mass Contacts" programme by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Pandit *Jawaharlal Nehru*.

The second and more important reason was the failure on the part of the Muslim League to capture power in any of the four Provinces in which Muslims have a majority.

Thirdly, the decision of the Congress to accept office in the Provinces where it had a majority deprived the Muslims in those provinces of the temporary advantages they had gained by the formation of interim ministries, in which the Muslims occupied a most important position—as a matter of fact most of the Interim Premiers were Muslims.

The fourth and perhaps the most decisive factor was the failure of the Congress-League negotiations for the formation of coalition ministries in the Congress-majority provinces, particularly because coalition ministries were functioning in the Muslim majority provinces.

At the psychological moment when the Muslim League was acutely feeling the denial of a share in power by the Congress took place certain events in Europe which decided for the League its course of action. I refer here to the Sudeten movement in Czechoslovakia which led to the separation of Sudetenland and its incorporation in German Reich in October 1938.

The Pakistan solution has made an irresistible appeal to the Pan-Islamic feelings of the Indian Mussalmans who believe that the establishment of Pakistan would bring their dream of a Muslim Confederacy—of the Islamic countries in the near East within the range of practical politics and very near.

The stand taken by the Muslim League called forth in its turn vigorous opposition from the Hindus and the Nationalist elements in the country, including the Nationalist Muslims. For the last four years a battle royal has been raging in the country over the Pakistan issue.

"LEAGUE IS SURE OF BRITISH SUPPORT"

The position has been made still more uncertain by the Calcutta speech of the Viceroy of 17th December, 1942, emphasising need for unity and for a strong central government in the country. It is also believed by some careful students of public and international affairs in India that considerations of foreign policy will ultimately prevent the British Government from according its approval and support to the League proposal for partition. I, however, feel that the League is sure of the support of the British Government in which Mr. *Churchill* is the Prime Minister and Mr. *Amery*, Secretary of State for India and which has already announced its adherence in the Cripps Proposals.

What then are the prospects for India in the near future? I am afraid, I cannot point before you a rosy picture. There are plenty of troubles and struggles ahead. In my opinion the future of India will depend upon how the problem of minorities is handled in Hindustan and as to what efforts are made to bring about a real fusion of the peoples into a single whole. A good beginning might be made with composite cabinets and by guaranteeing complete religious freedom and protection to the language and culture of minorities but a determined effort must be made to cultivate a purely secular outlook in public affairs and to discard untouchability of all kinds and to abandon personal, local and communal conceptions of law and politics and thus create in course of time denational, socialist States in the country. When that is accomplished the separated States shall return and form a Union of the Indian Socialist Republics.

That may appear to-day a most unreal dream but if Socialist Russia emerges victorious from this titanic struggle and if the socialist order spreads in other parts of the world after the war and if an Indian Lenin or Stalin arises in our midst, the dream may materialise at a not too distant future.

A. I. Muslim Educational Conference

52nd. Session—Aligarh—13th. February 1943

Presidential Address

Nawab Zahir Yar Jung Bahadur, an Amir of Paigah, Hyderabad State presided over the 52nd All-India Muslim Educational Conference held at Aligarh on the 13th. February 1943. In the course of a lengthy speech he paid a tribute to the rulers of Hyderabad of the Asaf Jha House who had always extended their patronage to education and the nobility of the State who considered it their sacred duty to serve the cause of education in the State and India. Indian Muslims and the Aligarh College, he said, owed a debt of gratitude to Nawab Salar Jung Bahadur I and to Sir Syed.

About 10,000 delegates and visitors were present.

Those present included Sir *Sultan Ahmed*, Sir *Jogendra Singh*, Nawab Sir *Mahomed Yusuf*, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung, Mr. *Ahmed E. H. Jaffer*, Mr. *Abdul Azeez*, Law Member, Hyderabad, Khan Bahadur *Jaffer Ali*, Minister of Education, Kashmir, *Mahomed Yunus*, Patna.

Khan Bahadur Moulvi *Mohamed Obaidul Rahaman Sherwani*, Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates after which Nawab Zahir Yar Jung delivered the presidential address.

After tracing the educational progress of Muslims since '75 Nawab Zahir Yar Jung Bahadur observed that conditions had altered considerably during the last half a century. Muslims had now no apathy towards English education. They had established schools, colleges and a University for themselves, and a stream of Muslim young men flowed out of these institutions fully equipped to fight the battles of life.

The system of education in India, the speaker said, was criticised by experts as unsuited to the present day needs, but no one had offered a constructive suggestion for its improvement. The Wardha scheme did not receive official support. No programme of education could be regarded as successful unless it embodied in it the spirit of accommodation, tolerance and universal fellowship. Modern education did not lay the foundation for this spirit. Indian Universities failed to keep pace with the march of times. They only succeeded in propagating the disease of unemployment instead of aiming at universal literacy. Government established Universities for producing candidates for Government service. The Universities provided no facilities for research work and there were no arrangements for getting promising students trained outside India. High school education was equally defective for it merely prepared candidates for colleges. In Hyderabad State this defect was sought to be remedied by reorganising the high school education so that students might enter life and eke out a livelihood. Elementary education did not meet the requirements of the village. Primary education without rural bias estranged the village boy from his surroundings.

Education of girls, the President urged, should be reformed. What was the advantage of giving our girls education according to the Cambridge syllabus and making them unfit for the important duties of womanhood? he asked. It was gratifying, he added, that the Zenana College of the Muslim University had provided for a course of studies in Domestic science. Education divorced from the needs of the country such as agriculture, industry and trade was useless. Indian industries, which found a world market centuries ago, had been declining during the last century and a half. The present industries were for war purposes. Higher education had failed to promote even ordinary industries in India. It had not produced technical experts. "Let us, therefore, prepare ourselves for the future by revolutionising the Indian educational system, according to the needs of India. India, after the war, would be brought closer to the rest of the world and therefore, a study of world languages should be encouraged so that our men might be able to exchange ideas and understand one another better. We, Muslims, have enough of educational institutions. We should now, without increasing that number, remodel the educational system so as to include agriculture, industry and commerce. Our economic well-being is intimately bound up with our educational progress."

WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Begum Zahir Yar Jung, presiding over the Women's Section of the Conference observed that no community or country could progress without educating its womenfolk. She advocated a system of education which would satisfy the needs of

women. When there was acute unemployment of educated men, women should not intensify the situation by getting the same type of education. Women should be trained as teachers and doctors, nurses and dhais. There was a crying need for them. Due to dearth of such women, the rate of mortality among women, particularly during child-birth, was appalling. Women should be trained in cottage industries, needlework and other arts and live a healthy life. The mode of life of Indian women was going to be changed after this war and let us prepare our daughters to meet the new demand. "Do not adorn your daughters with golden ornaments but with the ornament of education. No cart could be propelled with a single wheel. Both the wheels must be geared up and kept in order."

MR. HAROON JAFFAR ON SOCIAL REFORM

"At this stage of life, when the whole world is suffering there must be no attempt to compromise with evil and let us start fighting it first in our own community," said Mr. *Ahmed Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer* of Poona, in his presidential address to the Economic and Social Reform Section of the All-India Muslim Education Conference.

Mr. Ahmed Jaffer said: "Let us chalk out a well-planned programme of social and economic welfare and work it up with a stubbornness unknown in the past. Let us remember that a community without the necessary share of material wealth and property in a country stands no chance of survival in the struggle for existence."

Mr. Ahmed Jaffer struck a note of warning "that the aspirations of Pakistan will bear no fruit unless they are backed up by a programme of economic independence and efficiency in all aspects of life. So let us beg no concessions to live, but prove ourselves fit to live and vigorously live. Let us multiply Aligarh university types as regional centres of renaissance and produce an army of social workers who should make it as an ideal of their life to serve the community in all aspects. Let us avail ourselves of the existing facilities of industrial and commercial expansion, and tap all the resources at our command to regain respect in the society of nations."

The Nagpur University Convocation

Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker's Address

The following is the text of the Address delivered Mr. *Nalini Ranjan Sarker* at the Nagpur University Convocation held on the 8th. January, 1943.

I thank you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, for the great honour you have conferred on me in inviting me to deliver the Convocation Address of the Nagpur University this year. It is an honour which I greatly value. And in proportion to the value I set on it, I feel the difficulty of doing justice to the function you have thought fit to allot to me. Strangely enough, the task of addressing new graduates of our Universities has of late devolved on me with embarrassing frequency. The more I attempt the task the more I realise the intrinsic difficulties of speaking to the youth of the country as it leaves the comparative seclusion of the class-room and the lecture-hall to face the fierce climates of the real world. The idea behind this ancient institution of a convocation address is that it should mentally prepare the youth for this transition, so that the task should fall upon those who are most qualified for the purpose. When you chose me for this difficult task, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, I take it, Sir, that you credited me with a greater knowledge of the open air than of the hot-house where you cultured and nurtured these tender plants and flowers which will before long adorn our country and sweeten its atmosphere.

If the proof of the pudding lies in the eating, the test of education lies in the success attained by the products of Universities in the open air struggle for life. But too great a deference to the requirements of this struggle is apt not only to militate against the quality of education but also to hold up the progress of human societies towards higher levels of material and moral well-being. While, therefore, University teachers are in general aware of this acid test of the soundness of their work, they rightly refuse to allow themselves to be unduly influenced by considerations of the work-a-day world and go on fashioning the youth of the country in

accordance with the ideals they have in mind. When the examinations are over and the scholars have made adequate display of their attainments, when the time comes for them to flock in hundreds before the Chancellor and the Fellows to take with proud hands the tokens of their achievements, their sense of gratification is likely to be tempered by a vague realisation of what the future holds in store for them. The change from conditioned air to unconditioned, the cold draught that the mind experiences when it first begins to give thought to the question of employment, the first onset of doubt whether the idealism of youth will survive the tussle with realities, in other words the contrast between the ideal and the real—therein lies the essence of the crisis that intervenes in the lives of the young as they pass from school and college into real life.

My task at this moment as I understand it, is to throw a little light on the nature of this crisis so that as you proceed from College to real life you may approach it with some appreciation of the problems you have to face. Youth is naturally inclined by its inner promptings to high idealism and there can be no greater ideal. More is not given to any one generation than to envisage the social good with courage, faith and wisdom and to help in the realisation of such good. Viewed in this light, the present generation has the greatest opportunity before it for it faces the most arduous tasks that any other generation in men's long history had ever to face. In addressing a batch of young men and women sallying forth into the wide field of life it is very tempting for a man of my age to dwell on the virtues that should sustain them in the struggle that lies ahead. I realise, however, that the youth of to-day is no longer satisfied with mere advice or pious wishes. That is as it should be. I, too, confess to a feeling of the inadequacy of the sermons which were once considered good recipes for all the ills of life. At any rate, I feel certain that no one can claim, much less exercise, the right to indulge in sermonising, political or moral. The world we are handing over to the young is in a bad mess, rent asunder by disruptive forces and made sickening to sensitive minds by the colossal waste resulting from a world war. But the young are in it and the question that confronts them is what they are going to make of it in the future.

If you, my young friends, will give a moment's thought to the problems that will assail you as you step out of this hall in academic robes with diplomas in hand, you will realise that these problems form, in a sense, a hierarchy of values and at the same time involve a wide range of tasks of varying urgency with which your cultured minds with their warm human interest will have to deal, though always starting even like charity, with your own personal selves. As you step into a bleak competitive, almost inhospitable world, the most immediate problem you face is that of personal survival. To put it bluntly, at the start you will have to look for a job that will enable you to keep the wolf at bay, even if not far from your door. Refine it, you call it a career. Import an element of idealism into it, it is an avenue of social and national service. And from love of social service, it is only a step to the love of one's own country and an yearning to contribute to the nation's prosperity and security. As our horizon expands, we find that the nation does not live in a vacuum. There are other nations besides ourselves and our political and economic relations with them bear directly on our daily lives. If you remember that the problem of providing satisfactory jobs or opportunities to all can be solved only when we are masters of our own household, and again that the freedom of our country, once it is won, will be bound up with a stable international or world order, you will realise that all these values are more or less equally endangered in this world crisis which, fortunately or unfortunately, coincides with this juncture in your own personal lives.

The problem of adjustment which confronts us to-day is to formulate the terms of adequate relationship between this trilogy : Man, Nation and World-Society. In our own youthful days, we too had our own battles to fight. They were hard and bitter battles no doubt ; but Society as a whole then moved in placid flow and we were free to engage in our private battles, undistracted by wider issues. But to-day in national and international spheres, in social, economic and political fields, new relationships are emerging. If you attempt to view the issues in compartmentalised isolation, you will fail to measure up the new forces that are heading upon the world and as a consequence fail to adjust yourselves to this complex and dynamic environment. This holds good both for the individual and the nation. The individual has to take into account the setting of the community, the community that of the country and the country that of the world. Out of the common sense of the world submerged as it is by the anxieties and pre-occupations

of the war, there has arisen to-day into prominence a world which crystallises at once the immediate and the distant ideals of men, as an individual, as a national and as a member of a world order. Turn wherever you will, the world, you hear most, is security. It is natural that the tremendous insecurity of our times, the insecurity of individual life, of national survival, nay of civilisation itself, should focus human thought on security, the security of employment for earning one's livelihood, the security of national integrity, the security of world peace; in fact, the security which, unlike mere stability, can form the basis of progress, individual, national and international. We must take a look round the world and proceed from the wider spheres of world economics and politics to that of our own national and individual problems. It is most remarkable that to-day the great powers talk more of post-war international reconstruction than of post-war international settlement in the old political sense of indemnities and political boundaries. Economic and social questions are in the forefront of war and peace aims. They realise that no political institution or machinery can work miracles without stable, economic and social foundations, which will bring security to the great masses of people. President *Roosevelt's* list of the "four freedoms" or the Beveridge scheme of social security only dramatises this new orientation of thought.

The most acute forms in which socio-economic maladjustment reveals itself to-day are unemployment and poverty. Both these problems will have to be successfully tackled. The West now admits that a state of society in which vast quantities of food grains are destroyed while large sections of the population starve, must stand self-condemned. That the blight of unemployment should no longer be allowed to undermine social life is now generally recognised. Miss *Frances Perkins*, Secretary of Labour in the U. S. A. tersely put the problem of unemployment before the International Labour Conference in New York in the following words, "Every country at war now knows that unemployment is man-made and can be unmade by man. Faced by the necessity of mobilising all of our resources for purposes of destruction we have realised that man-power is among the scarcest of all resources. Man-made unemployment ought not to exist and need not exist in the post-war world."

The realisation that unemployment can be eliminated is by no means enough. Ways and means have to be devised by which this objective can be achieved. And this is a very difficult problem. War-time demonstration of the effectiveness of governmental action in mobilising economic resources for a specific purpose may have strengthened the case for its continuance in peace in order to solve the immediate problems of readjustment to which the post-war transition to a peace economy is bound to give rise, as also the long-term problems of maintaining a high level of economic activity so as to ensure a progressive improvement in the standard of living. But believers in individualist economy, while they agree that Government should in War-time assume wide powers of control over industry, and increasingly concern itself with its operations are nevertheless against the perpetuation of such control as a permanent principle of our economic system.

In the field of international political relationship, too, we see the same clash going on between the new ideas which are emerging out of the sheer forces of events and conservative reaction which is still fighting back. The lessons of a quarter century of the experiment of the League of Nations are that no stable international society and consequently no ordered, social progress, would be possible without a steady erosion of some of the sovereign rights of nations. This does not mean that the "nation" idea should be completely eliminated. "Nation" does indeed perform a necessary function in that it breaks up the unwieldiness of world problems and assures each community that for its own interests, it will not have to look up to a distant and hazy world-authority. But no international peace is possible unless the "right" of nation-states are seen against the back ground of correlated obligations. Unless national interests harmonise and merge into a higher collective interest, there can be no peace or security. This idea does not seem to find favour with the London Chamber of Commerce. In its Report on the *General Principles of a Post-war Economy* it has clearly stated that it cannot support "any scheme which in the economic sphere, relies upon some supra-national authority (which in practice must mean the most powerful nation or nations) to dictate to the weaker nations what their internal economic policy shall be." The Chamber believes, on the contrary, that "the largest measures of co-operation between nations will be realised when fear of financial and economic domination from outside is removed, and each nation is left entirely free to co-operate or not according to its own wishes, the extent of that co-operation also

being within its control. The Chamber, however, offers no practical guidance as to how this co-operation can be assured and the resulting economic conflicts avoided, if each nation continues to act according to its own will.

Indeed, at this stage of the war, nobody can possibly be in a position to say how this co-operation is to be brought about. Surely there is a great danger that the so-called co-operation may in practice mean autonomy for the greater powers while involving coercion of varying degrees for the lesser ones. It follows from this that nations like India cannot solve the post-war problem either of themselves or of the world at large unless they acquire the capacity to resist coercion when it is attempted by others and to offer effective co-operation where it is genuinely solicited. Up till now Asia with the exception of Japan has played but a subordinate role in world problems. But it is as likely as it is desirable that the centre of gravity will gradually shift from the West to the East. We have grown so accustomed to Europe's dominance over the world that we may often be inclined to assume this as part of a natural order of things. Yet, if seen in the true historical perspective, this has probably been only a transitory phase the basis of which has been steadily undermined since the close of the last century. For more than a century Asia has been the unhappy hunting-ground of European imperialism, but lately she has been in a state of active ferment. Within a few decades, Japan was transformed from a feudal into an industrial country and she speedily acquired for herself the status of a Great Power. China, which was considered less than ten years ago as incapable of organising an orderly Government, has by five years of dauntless, if unequal, struggle for freedom, greatly improved her political status. Again, under our very eyes we have seen the astonishing experiment which has turned a backward, semi-oriental country like the Soviet Union into a first-class world power. India, too, has been pulsating with new ideas and waking up to the political issues, intensely conscious of her vast potentialities.

The contribution that Asia can make to any future world equilibrium is receiving increasing emphasis. In an interesting volume entitled *Problems of 1960* Mr. Colin Clark observes that it is evident that "the whole equilibrium depends on the economic development of the Asiatic countries, particularly India and China, and their emergence as consumers of foodstuffs and importers of capital." Mr. Clark is of the opinion that the Asiatic countries should be large importers of capital for undertaking their industrial development, and that this capital outflow will materially contribute towards the maintenance of equilibrium in Europe and America. Mr. Clark also realises that in order to allay the suspicion of a domination by big European and financial interests to which this influx of foreign capital into Asiatic countries may give rise, it is necessary that, Europe and America should concede to the Asiatic people the same political and economic rights which they claim for themselves, so that Asiatic nations may be left free to choose their own form of Government and mould their own social and economic life. This last point is very important : these Asiatic countries could offer their co-operation and make any real contribution only as equals. A good measure of equality in the political and economic spheres is really a condition precedent of the desired co-operation of Asia by which it is hoped to maintain equilibrium in the world.

I, for one, feel that in the peace settlement and reconstruction which will follow the cessation of the war, it would be practically impossible for Europe and America to withhold such rights from dependent Asiatic countries. This is not a pious hope, but a conviction based on the logic of circumstances as they are moving to-day. There is a significant difference between World War I and World War II, so far as the Asiatic dependencies are concerned, which must make a vital difference to the fate of these countries after this War as compared with the results of the last War. The geographical focus of the last War was in Western Europe and in the Atlantic. In World War II, on the other hand, the focus of action in Western Europe and the Atlantic and the Mediterranean does not dominate the War as a whole. Far from it. It is no doubt true that in the last War there was fighting in some of the colonies or dependencies ; but neither the course nor the outcome of World War I was determined by the colonial factor and even after the war, the world remained a world in which hundreds of millions of people continued to be collectively owned by the peoples of a few privileged countries. In the present war the Colonies or at any rate the so-called backward countries like Russia and China, which the "Superior" Western countries have so far been accustomed to look down upon or patronize, are not only fighting for democracy but they have with conspicuous success resisted carefully planned aggression directed by the most centralised governments, controlling the most highly mobilized

industrial system, in Europe and Asia respectively. In fact, two countries which the West had never accepted as democracies are now half of the Big Four of the democratic Cause and, in actual fighting, the decisive half. Nor can the intelligence and efficiency of the Chinese and the Russians be any longer questioned after the astonishing display they have given of their ability in fighting aggression. The implications of all this after the war are sure to be far-reaching and compelling for the "advanced" countries. Consider, again, the possibilities in respect of India. The enormous contributions that India is making in men and in material for the defence of the Near East, Egypt and of the soil of India must make a tremendous difference. Victory, in such a situation, would raise at once questions that cut to the heart of a war against aggression, a people's war. The question of India's freedom will have an irresistible moral force behind it. For nothing could be more anomalous than to suggest that a country like India would be fighting for no better cause than to avert the danger of a threatened submission to a newly born imperialism simply to remain in her present bondage. The democratic countries, professing to fight for the upholding and maintenance of democracy, can no longer justify the continuance of collective ownership of one people by another which would be a complete negation of democracy itself. The colonising countries would find themselves confronted with the same situation in which America found herself at the time of the American Civil War, namely, that a country could not remain half slave and half free. The question which for the society of Abraham Lincoln's America was one of individual slaves and individual slave-owners is to-day, for the society of the world, a question of the collective ownership and the collective bondage of the colonial order. India and China between them contain a population of nearly 850 million and if to this were added the populations of Burma, British Malaya, Thailand, French-Indo-China and other Asiatic dependencies, the total would be approximately one billion people, which is nearly half the total population of the world. These are the peoples who, although involved in a war "for the preservation of democracy", do not enjoy any democracy, or, at any rate, none of them, China not excepted, have full unimpaired sovereignty. Liberation from an undemocratic and anti-democratic Japan would mean little to these countries if the old and obsolete colonial system of ownership of men by men were to continue. But the circumstances, as I have tried to indicate, would be far too compelling for the Western democracies to retain these dependencies after the war and to look upon and treat one-half of the world's population, as no more than valuable chattels recovered from the enemy.

The increasingly important role which India along with other Asiatic countries will play in the post-war reconstruction should make us conscious of the heavy responsibilities that we shall have to shoulder. We in India, stand on the threshold of great changes. Politically we are fast approaching a self-governing stage. I do not think the political goal we all have been striving for can be denied to us after the war. This means that in future refashioning of the world, we shall have to make our own contribution. At the same time we shall also have to bend our energies to an all-round development and rehabilitation of this great land of ours. India is a land of many paradoxes. The most tragic of them is that a land so richly endowed with natural resources should be stricken with such appalling poverty. A reconstruction of our socio-economic structure is urgently called for in harmony with the trend of developments in the rest of the world. In the economic sphere, we must work towards a more rational balance between our agriculture and industry. Agriculture will have to be placed on a scientific basis, and the industrial progress will have to be greatly accelerated so that we may ensure for our people a life free from want and fear and secure the necessary material basis for an adequate cultural life. As long as war cannot be ruled out, a highly developed industrial organisation is indispensable also to ensure national safety. Industrialisation is but a part of the more comprehensive task of re-vitalising our socio-economic structure. Side by side there must be a reorientation of our educational system so that we may be provided with that quality of personnel which alone can sustain this re-vitalised system. Whatever may be the actual form this work of reconstruction takes, there can be little doubt that it will be inspired by some of the new ideas in the economic sphere that are slowly but surely gaining ground. And the fundamental idea should be to gear our economic machine to the economics of plenty and the economics of leisure. The economics of plenty and of leisure can, however, be built only on the basis of well-thoughtout planning. Our objective should be to secure planned abundance.

Wise economic planning requires an atmosphere of political co-operation as

between the different nations. If our object is to secure work, food, leisure and the minimum of reasonable comforts of body and mind for every body, we must work for what is called welfare economics. Even before the war, people had become familiar with the idea of the economics of plenty. The great depression had robbed the old economics of scarcity of all its deceptive *rationale*. But thanks to the war-time experiments in economic organisation, the economics of plenty has now been shorn of its former Utopianism. If everybody can have a job in war even to the point of over-work and scarcity of labour why should it be otherwise in peace? That is the question that agitates every mind. It is now recognised that all that we now need to end poverty in the midst of plenty is organisation, planning and the energetic pursuit of well-defined task in an atmosphere of social goodwill and good understanding among all classes. Goodwill comes only of a clear understanding and acceptance of the ideal of social justice and of its practical deductions.

And here it is that, in this age of large-scale political and economic organisation, we stand in urgent need of re-defining some of our old concepts, *e. g.* the concept of liberty as the corner stone of our democratic faith. We cannot define liberty without reference to the positive conditions that nourish it. The negative concept of liberty as "*laissez-faire*" or "let me alone" is replaced by the positive concept of "give me a chance", a chance to all for self-expression. The fact is that economic developments which could not possibly have been anticipated when our political forms took shape, have created confusion and uncertainty in the working of the agencies of popular government, and thus have subjected democratic institutions to a basic strain. The most serious danger facing society to-day is that individualism, masquerading in the guise of the "rights of man", "liberty" etc., may be carried to a point fatal to social cohesion and to economic progress. We need to-day a new individual—an individual not in the pattern of the nineteenth century but an individual integral with the underlying social trends of a planned industrial civilisation.

Our youngmen must thus shed false ideas and expectations. The social and economic order is so shaking under the influence of the growing political consciousness of the common mass of people that we would do well to anticipate in the future a considerable narrowing of the disparities in respect of opportunities and incomes. This will no doubt be a welcome development. But as a necessary corollary of this development, the opportunities for amassing huge wealth, not to speak of amassing it quickly, will become fewer. The material aspirations of our youngmen, however talented, should be somewhat tempered by the accepted standards in our country as also by the needs of a more planned economic development. Great disparities of wealth would disappear as indeed they should. That will be the case as much for the great industrial and financial nations like Great Britain and the United States; as for poor undeveloped countries like China and India, though for different reasons. In the case of the former the heavy weight of war debts and the changes which the war is bringing about in their capital equipment together with the upsurge of democratic sentiment in their economic sphere will compel the state to direct its policies to the collective good of all rather than to the well-being of a particular class. Countries like India and China, however, have reached a position in which progress would be possible only if efforts are directed to the well-being of large sections of the masses and not to the large profits of a few. You have only to take a broad view of our present economic position and the trends of industrial development during the last decade or so, to realise that the scope for industrialisation, regarded merely as an avenue for investing surplus capital and as a source of profit for a small class of investors is extremely narrow, even if it is not altogether non-existent. There can be no great increase in national wealth unless there is an all-round increase in productive activity. And India has reached the stage when such increase can only result from large-scale planning.

I trust you see the bearing of all this in your personal lives. If there are no careers of the get-rich-quick millionaire open to you, if the ordinary jobs that will suffice to keep body and soul together are to flow only from the co-operative efforts of the entire nation, then does it not follow that success and happiness of your lives depend on the development of that capacity for intelligent, purposive co-operation in the absence of which the nation has hitherto been languishing politically and economically? And what I want to stress most before you to-day in the present context is that the capacity for co-operation, of which I have been speaking, is as important for using the freedom once it is won, as for actually winning it. I do not want to dilate here on our special political problems.

Although, unfortunately, because of the failure to attain an agreement between the leaders of Indian opinion on one side, and the Whitehall, on the other, there is a stalemate in the political life of the country with the consequence that improvement in India's political status remains in abeyance during the war, I, for my part, am quite certain in my mind that the end of the war see India free and—yes—united too, and admitted to her legitimate place among the nations of the world. To deserve that freedom not in the sense of receiving appreciative notes from patronising foreigners but in the sense of being able to use it to the permanent advantage of our own people and of mankind in general, that is the problem to which the thoughts and attention of our youth should be increasingly devoted.

The successful working of the new democratic institutions which are growing up in our country will again make new demands on the qualities of our people. The virtues that will be needed most are tolerance and intellectual discipline. Unfortunately, our society is largely sectionalised and our civic life is vitiated by communalism and intolerance. In a country where 80 to 90% of the people are illiterate, demagogic politicians can easily play upon the masses and thus hamper the successful working of democratic institutions. But the most unfortunate part of it is that even educated people often allow themselves to be carried away on the crests of emotion. We are faced with the curious phenomenon that persons who can be rational in the highest degree with regard to what may be called neutral or passionless problems, are found to succumb to irrational sentimentalism in dealing with questions which impinge on their basic traditional or cultural outlook. Thus great masses of men may be moved by irrelevant emotions, dead political shibboleths or outmoded patterns of thought which are not in the least congruent with existing social and economic realities and thus create a problem of social and political maladjustment of the first magnitude.

To give a decent burial to old prejudices and sectional loyalties is, I want you to remember, the first task of youth. It is for the young to resist the discords that short-sighted persons of an earlier generation had been fomenting and to take a hand in the education of our illiterate masses to a new sense of their responsibilities as the demos of a newly-born nation and to a recognition of the part they must play in firmly cementing the bond of nationhood that holds together the diverse races and peoples of the vast sub-continent that is India. Unless we succeed in creating this feeling of oneness and a strong conviction and fervour about our fundamental unity in the midst of diversities, we cannot expect India to attain to the fulness of her stature or to achieve the all-round development and proper recognition of her place in the comity of nations.

There is one other point which I would like to emphasise in connection with our freedom and our future. I would like you all to realise that India's future hangs on an allied Victory. We stand or fall with the Allied Nations. Let there be no mistaking about this, no false notions or perverted thinking.

I hope, my young friends, I have been able to give you a fair picture of the great epoch of reconstruction and regeneration which is opening out before you. I have deliberately refrained from offering you any advice in the usual moralistic vein, but have endeavoured to give you an idea of the great tasks and the fundamental social problems which will confront your generation. We are turning over a new chapter in our national life; and our future, both in the national and international field, is charged with immense possibilities, if only we would face it with clear vision, intelligent planning and hard work. In this great task, the role of leadership will fall upon you. For it is for you, young men and women, to hold and shape the new world.

Graduates of the University, I think I have said enough about the general problems and questions which are exercising and will, in the near future, exercise your minds, and make large demands on your intelligence, efficiency, integrity and idealism. It now only remains for me to congratulate you very heartily, before I close, on your splendid achievements and on the degrees and distinctions awarded to you at this Convocation. I have no doubt that in the world that awaits you outside the portals of your University, you will by your work and service prove yourselves worthy of the high traditions of your Alma Mater and add to its good name and reputation. I wish each one of you a full measure of success in your respective spheres. Graduates, my sincere good wishes pursue you in the wider world into which you are just stepping.

Aligarh Muslim University Convocation

Syed Abdul Aziz's Address

The following is the text of the Convocation Address delivered at the *Aligarh Muslim University* by Syed Abdul Aziz Barrister-at-Law (Patna) on the 13th February, 1943.

I do not think I can do better than begin this address with an expression of my profound sense of gratitude to His Exalted Highness the Nizam and to the authorities of the University at whose initiative His Exalted Highness was pleased to ask me to deliver this Convocation Address. I accepted the gracious invitation somewhat hesitatingly owing to a protracted sciatic pain which had lately become intense and from which I have not yet fully recovered. In this afflicted and crippled condition I have cheerfully endured the sufferings of a long journey from Hyderabad to Aligarh as I could not suppress or restrain my desire to place my humble services at your disposal and enjoy the privilege and pleasure of participating in a great function of such educational importance. But for my general health being good I might not have been able to be present here to-day.

This illustrious and royal Ruler of the Premier State is one of the greatest supporters of the cause of good education. Apart from the interest and initiative taken by His Exalted Highness in promoting primary, secondary and technical education on a practicable and liberal scale, his solicitude for the welfare and advancement of higher education led to the establishment of the Osmania University with some special features which are already bearing ample fruits. No visitor to the area allotted to the Osmania University, detached from the capital city though not far from it, can fail to be struck by the harmonious combination of the most beautiful features of Hindu-Muslim architecture in some of the buildings already erected and by their magnificence. They represent the glory of the ancient art of Ajanta and Ellora and the simple grandeur of Saracenic and Qutub Shahi architecture. These buildings, replete with modern equipment, include hostels for Hindus and Muslims without distinction and are provided with comforts and conveniences conducive to healthy and decent living. They make a visitor sigh for his youthful days and fill him with the desire that it was possible for him to be transformed into his teens and be admitted to the Osmania University as a student. The plan for future development of this University which, under the fostering care of His Exalted Highness and the support of his enlightened Government, gets an annual grant of 22 lakhs within the resources of a State on which a multitude of demands is made from various quarters, augurs well for higher education and for other similar schemes which will soon find a home and flourish in Hyderabad. Its august Ruler received a tribute from the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who, apart from his eminence in Law and statesmanship, is himself a model of refinement, culture and catholicity. In the course of his Convocation Address to the Osmania University in 1939, he said :—

"Meanwhile, let me pay a respectful tribute to your august Sovereign who, realising that men live not by bread alone, has provided out of his generosity a centre for all young and old—where they can meet from day to day and have a perpetual feast to feed their minds and souls on all that is best and noblest in human thought and human culture. Truly, therefore, a Sovereign who does it is entitled to be called not only Sultan of his Mulk but also *Sultan-ul-Ulum*".

Thus also can the Aligarh University be justly proud of having such a Sovereign as its Chancellor. That is not all. Aligarh has enjoyed the benevolence bestowed upon it by two previous Rulers of the Asafia dynasty, Nizamul Mulk V and VI. It owes a great deal to the liberality and wide outlook of the late Nawab Sir Salar Jung the First and to the sympathy and help received from the late Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, Nawab Vigarul Mulk and Nawab Imadul Mulk Syed Hosain Bilgrami who, for long periods, held high and distinguished offices in Hyderabad. The forerunner of the Muslim University was a small school established in 1869, called the Madrasatul Ulum. This school developed into a College and the College gave birth to the University which now occupies a unique position in India. The late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan of revered memory, tormented perhaps by the feeling of humiliation, grief and horror caused by the decadence, degeneration, wretchedness and helplessness of Indians in general and Muslims in particular, who had not only lost their country and were sunk in slavery but were

forlorn and friendless, realised the need for modern education to meet the requirements of the times and the transcendent importance of cultivating a superior intellect and high character which would enable his countrymen to recover the lost ground and lead a decent, useful and an honourable life. A country can be conquered but its culture and character, if saved from subjugation and cultivated further, can do more than make up for the deficiency and can one day reassert themselves.

Sir Syed perhaps aimed at or dreamt of the day when Muslims and Hindus would produce fine and sufficient materials for a man of extraordinary personality, soundness, sobriety, foresight, courage and independence like Mr. Jinnah, to lead and guide the Muslims, and a man of saintly simplicity, high ideals, shrewdness and proverbial patriotism, like Mr. Gandhi, to lead and guide the Hindus. It must also have been hoped that such two leaders would not vanish from the scene before effecting a union for common purposes between their respective communities which have, by their very magnitude, importance and other characteristics, acquired the status, notions and ambition of a nation conceived in a right spirit. Sir Syed's dream of producing such materials is about to be translated into a reality mainly by the plan he promulgated. In the execution of that plan, intended for the light and learning of youth, the contribution made by Hyderabad was of immense value.

Though, between 1875 and 1917, this Aligarh Muslim institution was honoured by the visits of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, several Indian Princes, many Viceroys and Governors, many notables and His Majesty the King of Afghanistan, yet the authorities, the staff, and the students of the Aligarh College longed for a visit by the Nizam. His Exalted Highness Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, first honoured the College by his visit in 1918 and all those connected with this national institution felt happy and proud on that occasion. With this increased interest in the Aligarh College and later in the University, His Exalted Highness's patronage knew no bounds. He continually enhanced his contributions till the non-recurring grants, made from time to time, amounted to over 20 lakhs and the permanent recurring grant to 61,000 a year. Only a few weeks ago, he was pleased to sanction a grant of a lumpsum of 15,000 for air and technical training and of 10,000 for the current year towards its recurring expenses as part of his vast contributions to the successful prosecution of the war. Being deeply concerned in the welfare of the students and believing in the necessity and value of cultivating a proper sense of proportion, balanced judgment and discipline, His Exalted Highness sent recently, in a letter to your Vice-Chancellor, a gracious Message to the students of this University in appreciation of their conduct during the rebellious and repulsive outbursts of August last when some impulsive, misguided and short-sighted youth sullied their own names by acts of folly and crime at the expense of their own country. The Message went on to say:—

"I ask you to let the students know what I have written to you in this connection and say that I have every hope that they will continue to show good conduct in future as well, specially at a time when India is passing through troublous times, and that perseverance and manly character are the chief necessary factors to combat the evil forces that are unfortunately rampant in the country; so it is all the more necessary that we should overcome them by our sagacity or prudence at all costs.

"I trust the students will listen to my advice given in their own interests."

Your worthy Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, the staff and the students, all deserve to be congratulated on this achievement. The Muslim students have, in the matter of their attitude towards the war, given a similar lead to the student community just as their elders, under the guidance of Mr. Jinnah, have given a lead to the masses and all classes of Muslims who, in spite of whatever grievances they may have against the British Government, have not only refrained from doing anything which might embarrass them in the prosecution of the war but have also, both directly and indirectly, made immense contributions to its successful prosecution. If the Muslim League has not officially announced its whole-hearted support of the war effort it is perhaps for the fear, so it appears, that it may be misunderstood as being satisfied with the policy and declarations of the British Government in respect of the future of the Muslims of India. All the same, Muslims are doing all they can within their means and power to save India from the Japanese and the Germans, not for British Imperialism but for Hindus and Muslims themselves and for all the other inhabitants of this vast sub-continent. They can, provided they unite, secure power and independence and yet arrange to remain in the British Commonwealth of Nations with the important advantage

which they could continue to enjoy of proper defence against foreign aggression as India cannot possess an efficient and sufficient Army, Navy and Air Force for a long time to come.

This leads me to review very briefly the present situation, both internal and external. Twelve months have rolled by since this University held its last Convocation—twelve months of the cataclysmic conflict which threatened to destroy all that the Universities of the world have stood for since the days when Muslim learning kept alive the flickering emblems of European civilisation. Think of the early days of 1942 when the barbarous Nazi hordes were forging their way to the Caucasus, threatening India's frontiers from the north, when Rommel's forces, then so invincible, were knocking at the gates of Alexandria and when the Japanese, possessing all the advantages of years of preparation, were menacing the eastern coast of India. Think how, during these twelve months, the tide has turned, how the smiter has been smitten in the Caucasus, how Rommel has sought safety in flight from Libya, surrendering men, munitions and territories, how the Japanese have been repulsed in New Guinea and forced to remain on the defensive in Burma and on other fronts, how Stalin's 'City of Steel,' melted by the fire and fury of ruthless Fascist forces and consecrated by the blood of the Red Army, has already begun to see new buildings and works on the site of the old to commemorate the heroism, valour, sacrifice and patriotism of the Russians who cleared Stalingrad inch by inch of the invading hordes. There is much beneath the cryptic announcement made the other day from Berlin that the battle of Stalingrad is over! The rising sun of victory of the United Nations can now be seen clearly above the horizon and I am particularly thankful that I am able to address you to-day when this great struggle for freedom and civilisation has, at last, entered upon its final and victorious stage.

It is a far cry from the days when a handful of eager students of the art of healing gathered round a bubbling spring in the south of Italy and made the University of Salerno and when another batch of enthusiastic students of the Roman Law congregated in Bologna—a far cry even from the days of the foundation of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Paris, Berlin and Vienna—to the establishment of the University of Aligarh which has not completed even a century of its existence. Nay, no sister University in India has yet attained that age. Nevertheless, our Universities may well teach what the fundamental ideals of a University should be to the older Universities in the totalitarian States where the humanistic ideals of old have been superseded by anti-social ideals, where Universities are mere tools in the hands of the Dictators of the hour, where teachers and pupils are but pawns in the hands of educational and propaganda ministries aiming at control of thought and regulation of reason by the regimentation of studies and the suppression of free opinion. For us, happily, the University is still, as in Great Britain and in the United States of America, except perhaps for occasional and brief lapses, the citadel of Truth, the bulwark of civilisation, the home of that freedom of the spirit which is true liberty—liberty to think, liberty to speak and liberty to teach—and which recognises only one limitation, namely, that even the fullest independence has its honest and becoming limits, limits placed by common sense, right feeling and respect for the sentiments and opinions of others. The end of all service according to Hindu philosophy if I have understood it rightly, is the realisation of the unity of all things that exist and the highest ideal of culture is self-discipline and self-realisation, enabling one to further the universal life of which one is an integral part. The Islamic conception of man's mission is also the same. The brotherhood of man and the realisation of unity in diversity are the cardinal principles of our faith as preached by our Prophet (Peace be on him!) and taught by Islamic saints, mystics, poets and philosophers. Islam insists on and emphasises the Unity of God and the service of mankind.

To this doctrine of Unity and to the efforts hitherto made towards its realisation, the greatest harm has been done by the gospel of Nationalism as preached in Europe since the end of the last Great War. Many have indeed a horror of that word. It has been so overworked, so abused and exploited that one wishes it could be expunged from the dictionary of all who have at heart the cause of universal brotherhood and the progress of humanity. Indeed, almost all the political and economic ills that the world has suffered and is suffering from, ills that have culminated in the devastating struggle now shaking the very foundations of civilisation, can be traced to that perverted view of nationalism which has vitiated international relationship for the last two decades. One of the most

deplorable consequences of such nationalism has been the gospel of race arrogance. In Europe, it has shattered the fundamental doctrine of humanity. It will, I fear, have the same disastrous results in India unless we resolve to do everything in our power to remain true to our high traditions, to hold fast to the true ideals and purpose of a University, to show liberty at work under the restraint imposed by self-discipline and to ensure that the students who have passed out and will pass out from this University and other Universities in this country will demonstrate to the world that, while demanding and finding a happy home for Muslims and leaving a happy home to Hindus and while claiming that each portion should be governed according to each community's ideas, both can live in abiding bonds of brotherhood.

This brings us to the political differences which now divide the two communities, differences which have, during recent years, taken such a serious turn that it is feared that the union of the two under an agreed constitution and particularly under one prepared by a Constituent Assembly such as is envisaged in certain quarters is practically impossible. On the one hand, Hindus demand independence— independence which will, so Muslims suspect or rather believe, not be real but will place Hindus in a position of domination over the Muslims and other minority communities with the help or connivance of the British who would be kept in India particularly for this purpose. On the other hand, Muslims demand a division of India into Hindu India and Muslim India. The Muslim point of view, as repeatedly put forward, is that any declaration transferring power to an oligarchy whose authority is fundamentally challenged cannot be maintained even with the help of British bayonets. Irrespective of the consideration that the Indian States will not recognise a devolution of Paramountcy to other hands or suffer a diminution instead of enhancement of their status and power, the opposition of so large a minority as a hundred million Musalmaus must rule out any purely Hindu variety of independence. As regards the Muslim demand for Pakistan, this is not the place to examine it in detail. I should, however, like to point out that the proposal appears to be opposed by people who do not appear or care to understand or discuss its nature and implications. The Muslims assert that the solidarity and integrity of India will become certain and real more by facing facts and admitting truths than by mere sentimental slogans such as "No vivisection." The demand has been put forward by a great and important community, a community which, to say the least, cannot be ignored. So, let it be discussed dispassionately in all its important bearings by representatives of its supporters and of its opponents in a friendly conference. If they get together in the right spirit they may come to the conclusion that real unity, strength and solidarity depend on an allocation of areas on some such lines. It might appear strange to some that I should expect strength and solidarity resulting from division and separation. But a little reflection will show that the relationship of Hindus and Muslims in India is like that of two brothers who, living under one roof, find themselves at variance in regard to different matters and on the verge of hostility, but who, once they have independent establishments of their own, find their relationship more cordial as a result of which they unite together in the common bond of affection for their parents and other members of the family. From what I can see, Muslims appear to have crossed the Rubicon and burnt their boat; their aim appears fixed, their course marked out, they mean to proceed according to their plans, not to encroach upon the rights of others but to secure their own, to live their own lives. Is it wise, is it practical politics to shout "Quit India" or "Akhand Hindustan," and fritter away energies in the pursuit of a will-o'-the-wisp, instead of concentrating on settlement with the Muslims and taking concerted and sustained action to achieve it? No compromise can be made with truth but political adjustments can be made and the longer this is delayed the greater will be the loss and embarrassment to the country in general and to the majority in particular.

I am afraid we have drifted into the dense forest of politics. Whether University students should plunge into that forest during their scholastic period is a question on which there exists considerable difference of opinion. I have always held the view that active participation by students in any political programme is harmful to them and to their country by excesses they may commit in excited passion and by distraction from their studies which it is their first duty to attend to exclusively and laboriously. But in a national crisis like the present and in the difficult times through which we are passing, even students, grown up students, may have to do more than what they did ordinarily. It is only right that you

should interest yourselves in problems affecting the entire well-being of society.

May I address a few words particularly to the lady students ? Muslim women can do a lot, specially in the social, educational, religious and domestic spheres. Think of the legal position and status secured by Islamic laws and injunctions in the Holy Quran to women. The rights of women, protected and recognised over thirteen centuries ago, are yet denied to women in other countries, in all other religions and by many Governments. Muslim women are equal, even superior in many respects, to men. They are in no way inferior. Fields of activities have, of course, to be divided according to suitability, character of work, and the natural advantages and disadvantages of the sex. Among the learned and talented ladies of Mecca and Medina in the time of our Prophet (Peace be on him !), let me mention only a few, who provide shining examples, some of whom were members of the Prophet's own family, like Hazrat Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet and the wife of Hazrat Ali. She was renowned for her saintliness and high intellectual attainments. Hazrat Zainab, the grand-daughter of our Prophet and a sister of Hazrat Husain, the martyr of Kerbala, was a most courageous and cultured lady. Hazrat Ayesha, the daughter of Hazrat Abu Bakr and the wife of our Prophet, once led an army into battle.

In the heyday of Muslim rule, there were no fewer than six thousand lady Doctors in Spain. Think of the ladies of your own country ; Gulbadan Bano Begum, one of the most erudite scholars, who was the daughter of the Emperor Babur ; Salima Sultana, an accomplished and scholarly princess, closely related to the Emperor Humayun ; Nur Jahan, the celebrated wife of the Eperor Jehangir, possessing not only the charms of beauty but a high cultural influence due to her talents and her knowledge of Arabic and Persian literature. Think also of Mumtaz Mahal, the beloved wife of Shah Jahan and the lady of the Taj, renowned not only for her beauty but also for her literary attainments. Zaibun Nisa, the Emperor Aurangzeb's cultured, scholarly and accomplished daughter was the authoress of interesting books and no mean poet. All the daughters of the Emperor Aurangzeb were highly educated. In our own days we have the modern counterparts of these distinguished women of Muslim India and it befits the occasion that we should at this moment recall the revered memory of your first Chancellor, Her Highness the late Begum of Bhopal. There are also the Princess Abida Sultan, the Heir-Apparent of Bhopal, Her Highness the Begum of Rampur, Her Highness the Princess of Berar and the Princess Niloufer of Hyderabad who, not to mention other noble and notable ladies in our community, have by their high education, culture and ability been the source of great strength and service to our society.

Permit me to repeat here what I said at the conference of the All-India Muslim Students Federation at Calcutta in December, 1937 :—"Many problems are crying for solution. If your elders and old men have not been able to achieve much, it is expected that Muslim youths will soon be able to remedy the backwardness of their community and co-operate with others in all matters calculated to advance the prosperity and happiness of the people generally. But if old men are too slow and cautious, young men are too rash and headstrong. If the former have achieved little and have been dilatory, the latter, unless properly guided and checked, may, by a revolutionary method ruin even that little which has been achieved. A happy medium must therefore be looked for if rapid progress without much risk is to be made."

"There are two methods which can be employed in seeking solution of various evils. The one is called direct, the other indirect. The direct method rushes with blind fury at the obstacle and usually fails. The indirect method considers ways and means, limitations, and takes the shortest path by going the longest way round. The indirect method ought to appeal to Muslim students who possess a high order of intellect and would leave nothing to chance and ferocity."

I had on that occasion further mentioned the following few things which I thought Muslim students should do : "Firstly, rise early and begin the day with a prayer to Providence as Muslims. Secondly, never retire for the night without saying your prayers. The beauties of these two prayers, apart from the importance of others can be most fully realised by listening to or remembering the joyful song sung in chorus by birds who rise before the Sun and begin to sing and do the same when they retire for the night as if they offered their anthem of gratitude to the Creator for what they have had and for what they were going to get. Thirdly, learn and practise plain and simple principles of religion, freeing it from, invented rituals, undergrowths, and superstitious beliefs and ceremonials. Fourthly

make a list of the existing social and religious customs and wipe out the useless and harmful and retain the useful ones. Fifthly, take a vow or make a solemn resolution that after completing your education those of you who fail to get into service or enter immediately any profession or business will set apart a period of two years for exclusive service to some public cause affecting the interests of the Muslims and will always prefer honorary and voluntary work to idleness if remunerative occupation could not be found. Out of two years so set apart six months should be devoted to the acquisition of training in some work of public utility according to one's taste and capacity and six months should be devoted exclusively to the work of organising the Muslim students in convenient localities. The remaining one year should be given to some other public cause."

You will pass out into the world from the portals of the University when India has arrived at the most critical stage in her political evolution. We would surely look to you to give a lead to your fellow citizens and to facilitate the transition to the new order. To that momentous issue the best minds in the world will have to be applied as soon as the present struggle ends—indeed, they should be applied from now onwards as everywhere people are longing for a new and happier order. But are they prepared for it, prepared to think it out and prepared to shoulder the task and carry its burden? The graduates and undergraduates of this and other Universities should form study circles and take up different problems of this future reconstruction according to their tastes, leanings, inclinations and knowledge, study them intensively, and strive to examine them in all their bearings in order to arrive at useful conclusions.

If we wish to profit by the experience of the past let us not forget that the essential condition for the building up of a new and better order is the realisation of what constitutes right relationship between man and man, class and class, nation and nation. In their struggle for existence people forget that not all the wealth and economic resources of the world would enable a nation to live in comfort unless it learns how to live in harmony with its neighbours. This is the lesson taught by the experience of the past. Will the people in all parts of the world profit by it? Will there be peace in the world after the aggressors of the present day are laid low? Who can say?

So much for the perpetual strife between people and people. What about the perpetual struggle that goes on within the heart of every individual—the struggle against one's lower self which our Prophet (Peace be on him!) has called the greatest crusade. The problem of problems for each one of us is to turn inward and to conquer the baser instincts which appear to persist despite our present day knowledge of science and the comparative diffusion of culture. Indeed, we find to-day that the worst aggressors are those who have been foremost in their mastery of knowledge and the sciences. Their minds are polished but not their hearts. They conquer dominions but they have not conquered themselves. You, my young friends, will not, I trust, fail to wage the great crusade enjoined by the Prophet, and possess a polished heart as well as a polished mind. Nothing will help you to overcome the evil in you as much as belief in religion and performance of the duties enjoined by it, provided rituals and superstitious practice are not made a substitute for real religion. This University will continue to be a coveted cradle of culture and knowledge, but higher education in this age and particularly in this country is not imparted or received as an end in itself, but is a means to an end, the end being to earn at least a competence if not a large income. The problem of increasing unemployment of the educated classes cannot be brought nearer to any solution unless graduates and undergraduates turn seriously to vocational and technical training and then to agriculture and industry. This brings me to the question of proficiency in the sciences. May I remind you how backward the Muslim community still is in the study of science and in trade and industry? During recent years its pace has been somewhat quickened. The statistics for the whole of India indicate a steady increase in the number of students but, as against a hundred students taking their degrees in arts, not even perhaps twenty take their degrees in any of the sciences. During his investigations, Sir Phillip Horthog was astonished to find that such a relatively small number of Muslim youths devoted themselves to the study of the physical and natural sciences. Contrast this with what happened during the glorious era of Islamic culture in the schools of Baghdad, Damascus, Cordova, Grenada, Cairo, Salerno, Andalusia. In those seats of learning every branch of science, astronomy, geography, chemistry, physics, mathematics, medicine, engineering, architecture, was eagerly studied by Muslim youths. Till lately there was little incentive to the youths of Indian Universities to take up the study of the

sciences in preference to the arts. But with the rapid industrialisation of India during this war and the opening of prospects for the future, the scientist has come into his own, and I trust the students of this University will eagerly equip themselves with knowledge of the sciences and emulate the achievements of Muslim scientists of old whose names are inscribed in letters of gold on the pages of our history.

Seeing, however, how certain powers have applied their knowledge of the sciences to the task of destruction, it may well be asked: To what end do we want to promote education and training in the physical and natural sciences? To increase man's capacity for evil, to out-do the brute in brutality? Has not the knowledge of science brought strife and ruin and destruction in its wake? It has to be admitted that scientific knowledge and research have been woefully abused. But merely because an instrument is misused by some, it cannot be withheld from use for beneficial purposes. True, we have had distressing examples of the barbarous use of force, reinforced by the discoveries of scientific research. But Might will rule the world only so long as Right is not ready. It is the mission of our Universities to make the rising generations so enlightened and self-disciplined as to make the world under their influence ready and willing for the rule of Right. It is its mission to call upon its teachers and students alike to cultivate reasonableness, open-mindedness, kindliness of feeling and gentleness, such as would make one shirk from the adoration of physical force. Allow me to tell you, in the words of one of the most famous scholars, M. Renan, to what good purpose the Muslims in the heyday of their prosperity applied their learning and knowledge of science.

"The taste for science and literature, had, by the tenth century, established in this privileged corner of the world (Spain) a toleration of which modern times hardly offer us an example. Christians, Jews, and Musalmans spoke the same tongue, sang the same songs, participated in the same literary and scientific studies. All the barriers which separated the various peoples were effaced; all worked with one accord in the work of a common civilisation."

I have no doubt that the same spirit of Islam inspires the followers of the faith to live in cordial cultural co-operation and comity with their neighbours and with the peoples of the world, and will enable them to serve the people committed to their care, irrespective of caste and creed, in any administration for which Muslims may be responsible. I pray that this great University of India, this precious possession and pride not only of Aligarh but of the entire Muslim community in India, may continue to flourish and that its authorities, teachers and pupils alike, may at all times be able justifiably to claim that within its precincts the minds as well as the hearts of youth are so disciplined and illumined as to enable them to achieve the highest mission of life by fulfilling the trust and discharging the duties which men owe to God for their actions and conduct, in short, the "Khilafat" of God on earth.

The Bombay University Convocation

Mr. B. J. Wadia's Address

The following is the text of the Address delivered by Mr. *B. J. Wadia*, M.A., LL.B., Bar-at-Law, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay, before the Adjourned Annual Convocation of the University on the 10th. February, 1943.

As one who has been educated exclusively in the University of Bombay I deem it a great privilege to hold my present office and to address you this evening. I am fully conscious of the responsibilities of my position, and in the performance of my duty today I crave your indulgence and goodwill. In the month of August last we would have offered you, Sir, our best wishes on the extension of your term of office. Today in February 1943, we feel sorry to bid farewell to Lady Lumley and to you. We wish both of you health and happiness, and hope that Bombay and its University will be in your minds whenever memory glides the past.

Since the Convocation last met in this hall in August 1941 the hand of death has removed several old friends from our midst. Sir Akbar Hydari was a

statesman and an educationist, and the Osmania University of Hyderabad will remain an eloquent testimony to his interest in education. Khan Bahadur Fardunji Dastur was the University Registrar for twenty-eight years from 1902 to 1930, and even after his retirement he was connected with our Foreign Universities Information Bureau till the date of his death. He was a man of high principles and rendered great service to the University and the students, for which he will always be remembered with gratitude and respect. Dr. Anandshanker Dhruv was another great educationist and a Sanskrit Scholar who was held in high esteem throughout the land. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla was an ardent advocate of free and compulsory primary education, and it was due to his untiring efforts that the cause advocated by him was ultimately accepted by the Legislature. Another veteran educationist was Mr. M. R. Paranjpe who took considerable interest in the work of the University, and kept it undiminished till the end. Rao Bahadur D. G. Padhye was an Ordinary Fellow from 1898 to 1919, and thereafter an Honorary Fellow till his death. He was also elected a representative of this University to the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Dr. V. S. Sukthankar was an Ordinary Fellow from 1928 to 1929, and in his death Oriental Scholarship has sustained a great loss. We mourn the loss of all these comrades of bygone days ; the memory of their work and their service will abide with us.

The last academic year was, like its predecessor, overshadowed by the war. During the three years and more that have elapsed since September 1939 the entire world has been drawn into a conflict which has been, and still is, waged on land, sea and in the air at the same time. What those years have meant, and what the days to come will mean in accumulated agony, loss and suffering to mankind, the future historian alone will tell. Great issues are at stake. They touch the very roots of the great principles on which the fabric of civilization has been built after years of trial and struggle. We are going through anxious times. The air is thick with "the troubles of our proud and angry dust". Goodwill is paralysed, and hope itself is driven back upon the resources of man's courage and upon recollections that hours as dark have been confronted and overcome in the past. It is at such junctures that men have to summon all the power that ideals possess of altering and moulding reality. Our country has also not escaped the grim consequences of war. In the fellowship of a common service and sacrifice India has taken a large share. It has made large contributions to the strength of the Allied forces, and to the output of the factories and workshops of the United Nations. We have not sought to shut the heart upon suffering, nor to wave aside the trials of this testing time ; and we share in the hope for victory. Vast changes, political, social, and industrial will take place in the reconstruction that will come as the aftermath of the war. They will affect the future course of education in which we are deeply interested, as they will also affect our whole outlook upon life. The Universities have received a noble heritage of culture from the past, and the defence of that heritage, for which humanity is even now engaged in a deadly and world-wide conflict, must always be our chief concern.

Education is bound to be a very important and effective link with the future of a troubled world. In India University education is hardly a century old. Our own University, the second Indian University in point of time, was incorporated in July 1857. It came into existence as an affiliating and examining body after the model of the old London University, and continued as such till the beginning of this century when the Act of 1904 was passed. Post-graduate teaching in a limited number of subjects for the M.A. degree course began some time about 1914, and the University School of Economics and Sociology was opened, the Department of Sociology in 1918 and that of Economics in 1921. We hope to expand the scope of these Departments by the appointment of additional staff for teaching special branches of Economics and Sociology. The present Act came into force in 1928, and the Department of Chemical Technology was opened about 1934. It was instituted to form a link between science and industry, and in order to enable graduates in pure science intending to adopt an industrial career to obtain the necessary technical training. The Department has added greatly to the reputation of the University, and the credit for it is due to my predecessors in office, to the Rev. Dr. John McKenzie who was associated with it in its initial stages, to Sir Vithal Chandavarkar who put it on a sound working basis, and to Sir Rustom Masani who zealously carried on the work of his predecessors. To all of them, and to the two Heads of the Department who have guided its work, the University is deeply indebted. We hope that the new building of the Department at Matunga of which the foundation was laid by you, Sir, as Chancellor early in 1941 will soon be ready for use and occupation.

The Department gives all facilities for carrying on the work of research to which we attach the highest value and importance. Our University is also expanding its new directions. We recently decided to institute a Department of Military Studies, and hope to make it a success with the co-operation of the Government and the Military authorities. The establishment of a Department of Psychology and Education and a department of Mathematics is also under contemplation. I have no doubt that before the University celebrates its centenary it will have fulfilled a very substantial part of the new programme of post-graduate study and research which has been placed in the forefront by the Act of 1928.

The Universities of India have not been spared by critics, some of whom are even prepared to ascribe every fault and defect in our social and economic system to University education. We are told that we take in too many of that class of students who are called "misfits", that higher education has led to unemployment, that it has not contributed anything of practical utility to the industrial life of the country, and that it has even tended to produce what is called a "slave mentality". I do not for one moment wish to suggest that our system of education is faultless. Our Universities, like all other human institutions, have their defects. But I do wish to suggest that, though some part of the criticism is justified, much of it is exaggerated too. If our critics mean to convey that higher education does not ensure jobs for our graduates, they are stating a fact, but that is different from saying that it is altogether useless. Whatever may be the controversies regarding education as a means to an end, it will be a sad day for our Universities when learning for its own sake ceases to be held in high honour. Education must be considered on its own terms and not in terms of economic utility. When we take stock of the results and bring to bear on the question our dispassionate judgment, shall we not say that higher education has been a great nation-building activity in the past? If it has done nothing more than to liberalize our views and to give us a all-India outlook, it will still have deserved well of our country and our people. Its main objectives are intellectual and moral culture and the moulding of character and personality. It is not enough to say that education should only aim at producing a "gentleman". The final bloom should be a gentleman-scholar, but we cannot produce that bloom unless it is rooted in free and fearless minds, and unless the educational work of our schools and colleges runs its normal course. This is not the time nor the occasion to enter into controversial questions. We wish our students well. We ask them only to realize that the University has no other purpose than the promotion of their true interests, to steer them securely along the course of hard and silent work, and to prepare them for the various tasks of life they will ultimately have to perform.

We all believe in the high value and importance of vocational education, but there will always be need for education in the higher sense of the term which Newman described as "liberal". Let us not look upon knowledge as useless unless it can be immediately turned into cash. To teach the youth of any country to snatch greedily at mental improvement with the sole purpose of disposing of it at a profit is really to narrow and injure education. Its true purport and mission must have been in the minds of those who conferred upon learning the name of "the humanities", based on the broad conception of universal sympathy and brotherhood. This indeed should be our highest ideal. Even if there are many creeds and communities in India, the spirit of true culture is one and indivisible, and Universities are the soil in which the seeds of unity can best germinate and bear fruit. The point at which education kindles and ennobles the best in us is when it takes us into the atmosphere of great men, great ideas, and great deeds. We have that atmosphere in our midst, and however much we may disagree in details, we can always go forward, still nourishing the sacred fire of learning, still cherishing our great ideas, ever hoping for perfection.

In thus emphasizing the cultural value of higher education I do not wish to under-estimate its utilitarian value. It is true that man does not live by bread alone, but it is also true that he cannot live without it. We think it is possible for our schools and colleges to adjust their teaching not only to the requirements of the professions and the services but of industry as well. Industry has a great future in India and it is necessary that our University education should be in living contact with the practical problems of the country. It is equally necessary that our Universities should be in some kind of intimate touch with civic life and opinion. We would welcome more co-operation between the University and well-established commercial houses and institutions. University education cannot by itself be a guarantee for ready employment, though it is our desire that our graduates may soon after their

graduation be independent and self-supporting. From that point of view vocational training is of the utmost importance. We hope to give diplomas in a large number of subjects besides teaching. Many of our secondary schools can be turned into semi-vocational institutions for imparting vocational training side by side with general education. Some of our schools have already been turned into institutions for training in subjects of a specialized vocational character. Even in the Colleges part-time training in such subjects could be given. The improvement of industrial and technological training in our schools and colleges will go a long way towards solving the problem of unemployment.

That problem has assumed a grave aspect at the present day, but it is a wrong notion to look upon the University as an employment bureau. On the other hand the problem cannot be solved by artificially restricting higher education and reducing the number of students. The mere increase in the number of graduates who depend on education for their livelihood is no proof of the statement that many of them are not fit to receive University education; nor will the simple elimination of the so-called "Misfits" be in itself a reform of our educational system. Education has a cultural value for every one apart from its mere economic returns. The reward of a life devoted to culture is the privilege of dedicating it to the service of one's fellow men and women. India needs the services of her cultured men and women in millions of homes, more especially in the villages. It is really sad to see so many of our youth, well equipped, able-bodied, willing to work, and yet unable to secure a decent living for themselves and those dependent upon them. It is equally sad to realize that after years of experimenting with different courses of study we should still be almost helpless watchers of the spectacle of workless young men and women. They should not, however, look down upon manual labour, nor look askance at small beginnings, nor should they be slow to take advantage of opportunities that come their way. This problem has given rise to anxious thought, but never has there been a stronger desire than at present to extend the advantages of education. Of that desire no man living can complain. The real cause of unemployment is the absence of suitable avenues of employment for our youth. The development of our national and potential resources and the establishment of industrial schools and technological institutions will certainly help to lessen the evil. The proper thing to do is not to condemn the so-called "misfits" as unfit, but to give them facilities for the training for which they are really fit. The underlying principle of every educational system should be the ever-open door. What we want is not only more industrial schools but also more industries and more openings in our mills, factories and workshops, and in leading commercial houses and public offices. The opening of schools and institutions cannot of itself provide more employment, and specialized education without the existence of the demand for it may make the problem even more acute. It may add to the number of the unemployed by creating a class of men with vocational training but no work to engage in.

A question which has been before the Government and the University for a long time is the establishment and recognition of separate Universities for certain well defined areas in the Province of Bombay. There are differences of opinion on the question, but there is no reason why separate Universities with their jurisdiction properly defined should not be encouraged. They would to some extent at least lessen the congestion and relieve the burden lying on our University. Once again a Committee is deliberating over the question of separate University for Maharashtra, and the outcome of its deliberations will soon be before us. It is not quite clear whether there is enough general enthusiasm to support the project. Questions of detail will, I am sure, be carefully considered, of which the most important is that of finance.

The Matriculation Examination is, and I hope always will be, under the control of the University. The numbers appearing for it every year have been increasing. The first examination was held in 1859 when 132 appeared and 22 passed. Over 39,000 appeared in March last, but perhaps the number may fall this year owing to the disturbances in our student world. Although the Government have now resolved to institute a School Leaving Certificate Examination at the end of the secondary school course, particularly with regard to students going in for vocational and practical courses, the matriculation will, I believe, continue to draw large numbers, and it is our desire that the control of the University over it should in no way be relaxed. This examination is entirely the affair of the University, as it is an examination giving entrance to our higher courses of study. It has no doubt grown to vast proportions, and complaints are heard about the

vagaries of examiners and disparity of standards. We are doing our best to minimize these defects as much as possible. It is also necessary that we should try to lessen the burden of class-room work and home-work on the pupils in our schools. Our present system of school education is more directed to the overcharging of the memory than to the true cultivation and discipline of the mind. It is also unfortunate that undue importance is attached to examinations, though there are certain qualities of the mind which can be tested by examinations much more simply and more effectively than in any other way.

Closely connected with questions appertaining to higher education is that of the place of English in our courses of study. In recent times there has been a tendency to deprecate its use as a medium of instruction. There are, however, many educationists who stand out for the claims of English, and personally I believe that the abolition of English or giving it a secondary place in our educational system will be a grave error and a retrograde step. I am aware that in saying this I am treading on delicate ground. No one denies that many of our modern Indian languages are rich in literature. It is also true that, as education is a nationalizing agency, a cultivation of the Indian languages is essential for establishing close contact with the masses in order to liquidate their illiteracy. On the other hand the English language is both rich in its literature and rich in the vocabulary of political and civic freedom. It is indeed ironical that the country as it progresses on the road to complete freedom should attempt to belittle the very agency which has in large measure made our progress approach reality. English has largely contributed to the unifying processes apparent in India today, and apart from sentiment there is as yet no suitable alternative to take its place.

The scenes are shifting in the great theatre of the world. The conditions in India are also rapidly changing. The percentage of literacy in the land is still very low, though the number of schools and colleges has increased, and woman's education to which this University attaches great importance is making good progress especially in the large cities and towns of the country. Education deals with life, and the conditions of life are so different from what they used to be only a generation ago. We live in a more complex world than our fathers did before us, and in a still more complex world than did our grandfathers. New problems arise on all sides, and the old ways no longer hold. A sense of the higher values, however, is the surest safeguard against the fancies of the passing hour. The modern trend is not towards an easier and more comfortable life, but towards a higher purpose in which the larger cultural issues of the spirit and the intellect are bound to play an increasingly important part. While remaining true to the land of our birth, we do not wish to repudiate whatever we can learn from other places and other lands. We want a synthesis of the highest ideals of the East and the West, combining all that is valuable in our ancient civilization with the progressive elements of western culture which help to modernize the outlook on life.

Before I resume my seat I wish to the young ladies and gentlemen who have taken their degrees my warm congratulations on their success. You have to-day received gifts of great value in life, and I am sure you will make the best use of them. It is our earnest wish that you will carry from your Colleges to the larger world outside the great ideals of human brotherhood and of service to your fellowmen and women, which it is for our Universities to foster and to promote. Do not feel disappointed from the start, nor let your lives be overwhelmed by the bitterness of temporary failure. Be true to yourselves and to the best in you. Be patient and persevere, and you will succeed in the end. Above all, let a deep and all-pervading sense of responsibility to the great Creator which has ever been the distinguishing trait of our Indian character always accompany you through life. In it you will find a comfort and an encouragement which the applause of the crowd can never bring.

The Gurukul University Convocation

Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee's Address

The following is the text of the Convocation Address delivered by Dr. *Syama Prasad Mookherjee* at the Gurukul Viswavidyalaya Convocation held at Kangri, Hardwar on the 25th April 1943 :—

I am deeply grateful to you for the honour you have done me in asking me to address your Annual Convocation. This is my first visit to this great seat of learning which we feel proud to regard as a national asset. Let me pay my tribute of respect to the memory of your illustrious founder and his renowned successors, who had not only the courage and vision to propound new educational ideals but also the capacity and determination to translate them into practice by the establishment and development of institutions dedicated to the cause they held so dear and sacred. To-day we stand at the cross-roads of history. Our beloved motherland, rich with an ancient heritage, struggles, for the attainment of that free status which is her birth-right. It is through education that the ultimate battle of Indian freedom will be won. The gigantic task of reconstruction, cultural, social, economic and political can be rendered possible through the co-ordinated efforts of bands of trained and disciplined Indians. Armed with the knowledge of India's past glory and greatness, her strength and weakness, it is they who can place before their country a programme of work, which while loyal to the fundamental traditions of Indian civilisation will be adapted to the changing conditions of the modern world.

If the history of education in British India is traced by an impartial historian, the record will be hardly creditable to our ruling class. We have suffered not for want of zeal and devotion for the cause of education on the part of the children of the soil, but on account of the colossal blunder made by our rulers while formulating their educational policy a little over a century ago. That policy determined in the days of Bentinck and Macaulay, was influenced not by considerations of the welfare of the Indian people but of the advancement of the interests of the ruling class. In no country has education properly developed unless it has drawn its inspiration from the fountain of its own national life. Education with its roots cut off and superimposed by the edicts of an alien power is doomed to ultimate failure. Applied to a subject-race which has not entirely lost its intellectual curiosity and virility, such a system may for some generations foster an artificial growth ; it may even produce a race of able imitators but it can never inspire or elevate the people as a whole, far less advance their permanent welfare.

When Bentinck decided to concentrate State aid and support on European education alone, he started an era of cultural conquest of the Indian people. Afraid of the possible dangerous results of the spread of knowledge among the masses of the people, Macaulay and his co-workers chose to favour a select class of Indians and train them on Western ideas not with a view to help them develop into self-reliant and patriotic Indians, but as Macaulay himself said, to form a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. Contemporaneous records of those days disclose a lamentable lack of knowledge of our masters of the greatness of India's past civilisation. They indeed portray a remarkable over-emphasis on the so-called virtues of Western culture and an unconcealed contempt for everything Indian. What we deplore is not that the gate of Western knowledge was thrown open to Indians, but that such knowledge was imported to India at the sacrifice of our own cultural heritage. What was needed was a proper synthesis between the two systems and not neglect, far less destruction of the Indian base. India's chequered history amply demonstrates that during a period when many of the European countries remained steeped in ignorance and barbarity, our great seers, savants and sages, backed by royal support, had attained an intellectual eminence which might well be the envy of any highly civilised nation. In this country was developed a state of society which encouraged not merely scholastic learning, philosophy and religion, but also art, architecture, medicine, science, astronomy and engineering. Education must be nourished by ideas and thoughts consistent with the traditions of the country which it claims to serve. The sustaining force of Western education in India was chiefly the glamour of State service. Education

was encouraged not for its own sake but for opening avenues of employment essential for the successful functioning of a bureaucratic machinery.

I have no desire to trace here the growth of the educational system in India in detail. Macaulay's prophecy was partially falsified by the results that followed its adoption. The national consciousness of educated Indians could not be suppressed and far from being blind supporters of alien rule, they themselves became the torch-bearers of revolt. The education of the masses was neglected in a manner unprecedented in the history of any civilised administration. The educational system failed to serve the real needs of India and its defects were soon manifest to patriotic Indians. Attempts have no doubt been made from time to time to introduce far-reaching changes into the educational system in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the people. In the field of higher teaching and research, in arts and science, it has been demonstrated that the power of original thinking of Indian scholars has not been extinguished and they are capable of holding their own against any foreigner. Partial success has been achieved in some spheres of thought and activity but a general dissatisfaction is evident suggesting a thorough over-hauling of the entire system.

The problem of education can never be fully solved in a manner acceptable to self-respecting Indians until and unless it is left in the hands of a government representing the national will and freed from foreign domination. We move indeed in a vicious circle. Without education properly outlined and directed we cannot attain our freedom. Without freedom and full control over our own destinies, we cannot reshape our educational policy entirely according to our will and requirements. So long as the present situation continues, however, it is obvious we have to make the best use of the existing machinery and by constant efforts and agitation secure changes and improvements which will bring us as near our goal as possible. Acceptance of our national languages as the media of instruction and examination up to the highest standard is a fundamental condition which has yet to be fulfilled. You have rightly adopted this course in developing your activities. Each province has its own major language and this should be accepted in its own educational sphere. If there is another language which has a substantial number of adherents, this may also receive recognition under suitable conditions, although the multiplicity of languages within the same provincial zone may lead to obvious complications. A bureau should be set up in each province under the supervision of well trained scholars and working in close co-operation with Government and Universities, it should undertake the preparation of books in all subjects of study in the provincial language. A working knowledge of English at the post-elementary stage is sufficient for our ordinary purposes except in the case of that limited number of scholars who may choose to study the English language and literature as part of their academic training. Similarly a working knowledge of Hindi is essential so that direct contact among peoples of different provinces may be maintained. The study of different subjects has to be re-organised in a manner suited to the conditions of our country. Subjects like History, Economics and Social Science have to be dealt with in relation to Indian environments. With regard to Science which knows no geographical boundaries, the nomenclature should not be divorced from what is in use in other parts of the world, for only thus can we keep ourselves in touch with world-progress, and retain contact with co-workers outside our own sphere of activity.

While we cannot but emphasise the well-equipped libraries and laboratories, seminars and museums in any system of national education, we have to keep down unnecessary expenditure on buildings and hostels. In a poor country such as ours we should aim at minimising expenditure in every possible manner so that money thus released may be utilised for the progressive expansion of education. The conditions of living and training of our alumni should be such as to render it possible for them on the termination of their studies to identify themselves without any pang with the environments amidst which they had been previously accustomed to live. Nothing is more ruinous to the cause of our country's progress than to create a separate class of so-called educated Indians, entirely out of touch in outlook and mode of living with the vast millions of their less fortunate fellow-countrymen to whose service they must dedicate their lives.

Education can hardly be separated from the social and economic surroundings of the people. While those responsible for imparting education cannot guarantee employment to all students, the system should be so regulated that the training given is a help and not a hindrance to them in their struggle for existence. For this reason education must be many-sided and institutions of various types must

grow up so as to train people in manifold directions suited to the economic and industrial progress of the country. It is in this sphere that a National Government will deem it a supreme duty to co-ordinate effectively the activities of academic institutions with trade, commerce, agriculture and industry. There can be no clash of interests among these agencies only if all strive to achieve one ultimate end—the service of the nation as a whole.

Relation between teacher and student must be such as between father and son. It is only by the fulfilment of this condition that a correct standard of education can be maintained and its objects properly fulfilled. Obedience that grows out of spontaneous loyalty and affection is permanent; enforced discipline born of the fear of rules or rods fails to mould the character of the students. Your basic concept of Gurukula—the home of the teacher—is a gift of the ancient Indian mind and has seldom penetrated into the artificial atmosphere of residential schools, copied from the Western pattern in many parts of India. An Indian Gurukula cannot separate education from the mainsprings of Indian *Dharma*, interpreted in its broadest sense. The heritage that belongs to an Indian youth must be clearly and boldly held before his mind's eye. The eternal value of the teachings of the ancient seers must be explained to him—not for lowering his vision or choking his spirit of inquisitiveness, but for making him judge for himself their fundamental values. Civilisation in our society meant progressive socialisation of our lives by developing all the finer feeling which helped us to realise our own selves in others and other in our own selves. This is why our social life had been dominated more by moral consciousness rather than political. If to-day we suffer from divisions and disruptions, the fault lies with those interpreters who for historical reasons clung to forms and practices and narrowed the base of the original structure of our society striking at the root of service and equality, so manifest in the teachings of our ancient seers. Pride in one's national heritage such as ours which transcends all barriers of race and creed must be implanted in the heart of our youth, for by this alone will he shake off an inferiority complex and lack of self-confidence, fatal to the cause of our progress. We claim that instead of turning westwards we can rebuild our society fundamentally on our own model. In a country such as ours with people following different religions and faiths, we must so adjust our movements as to permit full scope for intellectual and cultural development to all essential units, each remaining loyal to its creed, helpful and trustful of each other, and all owing allegiance to the imperishable spirit of the Indian unity.

To-day the world is faced with a crisis unknown in the history of human civilisation. Western civilisation has failed to give the world peace and freedom. In spite of material advancement and scientific and industrial progress, the ruling classes in Europe were dominated by the triple forces of power, prestige and possession. The future happiness of the world will depend on the outlook of the men who control the destinies of the stronger and the more powerful nations. Whatever lip-sympathy they may pay to the doctrine of equality, democracy and freedom, if in their actions they allow themselves to be dominated by a policy of aggression and exploitation of weaker or less fortunate countries, they can never hope for the inauguration of a better world-order. The future of the world lies in a federation of free countries where each will have the scope of developing its national life in accordance with its best ideals and traditions. If this goal is acceptable to all, the educational system in all parts of the world must be so moulded as to encourage the growth of correct international behaviour and understanding. Among the fundamental moral qualities, man must have a deep concern for the good life of his fellows. Every person should be given a fair chance of growing up in mind and body and making the best of his natural faculties. He must have a sense of social responsibility and the will to sink his personal interests and that of his class in the common good. He must be a man of independent judgment, respect the individualities of others and be tolerant to opinions in conflict with his own. He should realise that he has responsibility not only as a citizen of his own country but also as a citizen of the world, that there must be equal justice for all, that Government should be based on general good-will and support rather than on brute force.

One of the urgent problems confronting us is replanning of a system of national education suited to our needs and aspirations. We do not yet know when political conditions will permit us to give effect to such a reformed scheme. But this must form a major part of post-war reconstruction. We should lose no time in setting up a competent machinery, fully representative of all interests, which

should explore the lines of our future educational programme. The matter will not be an easy one. Problems relating to languages, traditions, needs of different communities, and employment will require the closest examination. The aim of education has to be defined with clearness and precision. Briefly put, our object should be to develop every Indian child as completely as possible so that he may feel himself consciously at one with his community, share in its traditions of the past, its life and action in the present and its aspirations and responsibility for the future. A vast country like India will present problems peculiar to particular provinces. Our aim should be to inculcate in the mind of every child a passionate loyalty to the spirit of Indian unity and so to regulate his daily work that he may become aware that what he is doing is for the advancement of his nation and through his nation of humanity at large.

Your great institution will contribute in no small degree to the solution of the Indian educational problem. Regimentation of rules and adoption of a rigid pattern in the sphere of education virtually give it a death blow. They strike at the root of its life and lead to deadly stagnation. You have demonstrated that education in this country can be organised by a correct synthesis between the fundamental aspects of Indian civilisation and the true requirements of a scientific age. The influences for the good which alone can save human civilisation from the destructive forces of an arrogant and selfish materialism have been steadily nurtured by you inspite of grave obstacles. In the task of reconstruction of Indian society you are bound to play a dominant part and your experiences will influence in no small measure the future course of educational policy and administration in this country. India amidst all her diversities present a unity of thought and action which is indeed remarkable. Inspite of political bondage we have been able to keep our heads erect because of the inherent power of assimilation that the Indian mind has shown itself capable of. The aim of our culture has been the complete realisation of life. Nature, man and God make for life entire knowledge; and service and love are the materials which go to the making of man complete. In the firm belief that the cause of Indian advancement is just and righteous, and standing at the foot of the Himalayas and near the Holy River that have from time immemorial witnessed the mighty career of Indian civilisation, which no alien Power can crush, let us draw inspiration from the Glorious Past, sustain fortitude and strength to face the trials and tribulations of the Present and fearlessly contribute our humble share in the re-building of a free and united India of the Future. Let us gather in our own the voices of India's oppressed millions and proclaim in the words of our beloved Poet our determination to march along the path of truth and justice and to consider no sacrifice, no preparation too great for the emancipation of our Motherland :

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high :

Where knowledge is free ;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls :

Where words come out from the depth of truth :

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection :

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit ;

Where the mind is led forward by Thee into everwidening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake !"

The Osmania University Convocation

Sir Ardeshtir Dalal's Address

The following is the text of the Convocation Address delivered by Sir *Ardeshtir Rustomji Dalal*, Kt., I.O.S. (Retd.) at the Osmania University Convocation held at Hyderabad (Deccan) on the 19th. March 1943 :—

May I begin by expressing my keen appreciation of the great honour His Exalted Highness and the authorities of the University have done me by inviting me to deliver the Convocation Address this year. I do not claim to have made any special study of educational problems or to have achieved any such distinction in

the realms of science, literature or politics as to entitle me to the compliment you have paid me. I would request you therefore to bear my limitations in mind and extend your indulgence to me if my address does not come up to the very high standard which my distinguished predecessors have set.

In the Osmania University you set out to do, and have already succeeded in doing something that is unique in the educational annals of this country. Appreciating the defects inseparable from a system of education through the medium of a foreign language, such as the strain on the students' memory, the stifling of originality and the unbridgeable gulf created between the educated classes and the mass of the population, you have with a vision and a courage worthy of admiration, founded a University imparting education through the medium of Urdu. At the same time, through your Bureau of Translation with its large staff of highly qualified translators, you have succeeded in translating the greater part of the books embracing practically the whole range of university studies and have thus not only freed the students from the shackles of a foreign language but have contributed a great deal to the advancement of Urdu language and literature.

His Exalted Highness, whose name this University bears and who through the foundation of this University has rendered a unique service to the cause of education not only in his own State but throughout India, has affirmed in the charter founding the University that his purpose was "the inauguration of a University in the State in which the knowledge and culture of ancient and modern times may be blended so harmoniously as to remove the defects created by the present system of education and full advantage may be taken of all that is best in the ancient and modern systems of physical, intellectual and spiritual culture. In addition to its primary object to diffuse knowledge, it should aim at the moral training of students and give an impetus to research in all scientific subjects." The progress of the University since its foundation indicates that this purpose is being fulfilled.

To the late Nawab Hydar Nawaz Jung Bahadur, known to his friends in British India as Sir Akbar Hydari, whose death we so deeply mourn, this University owes a great and abiding debt. It was his vision, courage and foresight which enabled the Osmania University to be founded on the present lines and to reach the stature to which it has arrived today. When as Secretary in the Education Department in 1917, Sir Akbar Hydari submitted the memorandum to His Exalted Highness which led to the inauguration of the University, he took the first step on the path which will enable this country to find its true place in the commonwealth of culture. You have not only made the attainment of culture easy and pleasant for the student but have put him in a position of vantage to disseminate it among the mass of the population in their own mother-tongue through adult education classes, popular lectures and the like.

Another feature of your University which, though not unique, is almost equally important, is that it is a residential and teaching as well as an examining body. With reference to this, I cannot do better than quote the following words of Cardinal Newman, written nearly a century ago: "I protest to you, gentlemen, that if I had to choose between a so-called university which dispensed with residence and tutorial superintendence and gave its degrees to any person who passed an examination in a wide range of subjects and a university which had no professors and examinations at all but merely brought a number of young men together for three or four years and then sent them away, if I were asked which of these two methods was a better discipline of the intellect, which of the two courses was the more successful in training, moulding and enlarging the mind, which sent out men the more fitted for secular duties, which produced better public men, men of the world, men whose names would descend to posterity, I have no hesitation in giving the preference to that university which did nothing, over that which exacted of its members an acquaintance with every science under the sun." Your University combines the advantages of a residential and teaching as well as an examining university and there can be no question to my mind that it is the best type of university suited to your local conditions. The insistence on compulsory residence which enables the full advantages of a corporate life, of the contact of mind with mind both of students as well as teachers to be attained, is another gratifying feature. I also note that special provision is made for the education of women in the University up to the Masters Degree in Arts, Science and Education and that facilities are provided for their corporate residence.

It redounds greatly to the credit and honour of your gracious sovereign that he transcended the narrow conception of a sectarian university and founded an institution which throws open its portals to all the youth of Hyderabad irrespective of

caste or creed in accordance with the catholic ideals of a true university. This principle of toleration, this synthesis of cultures, is expressed even in the architecture of your stately buildings, which are the realisations in stone of the inspirations of your gifted architect, Nawab Zain Yar Jung Bahadur and of M. Jasper. The harmonious fusion of the Ajanta and the Moghul styles in the design of your buildings is a symbol and an object-lesson. It is a symbol of the mutual love and goodwill of the two great communities, Hindus and Muslims, who compose the population of the State, and of the tradition of tolerance established and cherished by the Rulers of the Asaf Jahi dynasty. It is an object lesson of permanent value to all those who enter its portals to enrich those traditions and to foster those feelings of love and brotherhood among all communities.

I must congratulate the authorities of the University on the scheme of extension and extra-mural lectures which they have organized. Among those who have delivered the extension lectures, I find the distinguished names of philosophers, poets, scientists and statesman. To have listened to Rabindranath Tagore, Muhammad Iqbal or C. V. Raman is in itself a liberal education.

Your extra-mural activities enable you to carry the light of learning to the forum and the market-place and to share with your less fortunate brothers some of the benefits of higher education.

In pursuance of the aim of the founder to achieve a harmonious blend of ancient and modern culture, you are actively promoting studies and research in oriental languages, Sanskrit as well as Arabic. The Dairat-ul-Maarif which carries on the work of editing and publishing rare Arabic manuscripts has won international reputation for itself. It is this harmonious blend, this happy synthesis not only of ancient and modern culture but of Hindu and Muslim thought and spirit, the achievement of which should be the principal aim and crowning glory of your University.

Synthesis in the spheres of literature, philosophy and science has always formed the hall-mark of Islamic culture. On the one hand, we have a chain of venerable universities which have carried out this task through the ages, thus the University of Cordova combined the thought of Islam, of Spain and of Palestine. The El Azhar University of Cairo united the cultures of Egypt, Greece and Arabia. The famous Nizamia University of Baghdad had perhaps the largest number of students devoted to researches in Greek philosophy. Plato and Aristotle Galen and Hippocrates were household words in Baghdad. The number of commentaries on Aristotle and Plato written by the alumni of the Nizamia could be counted by thousands.

Another aspect of the gathering of these scattered seeds of knowledge is the way in which cultures and languages are formed. Thus it was the union of the spirit and philosophy of Iran and Arabia that has given us the glorious Persian language and literature. Similarly, the development of Urdu itself required the synthesis of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. That wellknown epoch of Persian literature which distinguished the Moghul dynasty was due to the co-operation of foreign emigrants and local scholars both Muslim and Hindu. Thus a liberal prince like Dara Shikoh could write a book on the harmony of Indian and Sufi philosophy and entitle it significantly enough the Majmu'ul Bahrain. Just as in the Dark Ages Islamic scholars kept alive the torch of learning and spread the wisdom of the East, enriched by their own original contributions, to all the countries of Europe where their arms led them until it was taken over and rekindled by the universities of the Renaissance, so let me hope that the torch of indigenous Indian culture, not Muslim nor Hindu but a true fusion of both, kindled at this University may spread light and lustre throughout the length and breadth of India.

No education can be universal in the real sense of the word which neglects the physical development of the students. From that point of view I cannot commend too highly the policy adopted by you of making some kind of physical activity compulsory for all students of the Intermediate, B.A. and B.Sc. classes as well as those of the professional colleges. The most important of such activities is that provided by the University Training Corps. The sad lessons of the present war have taught us, if any lesson were needed, the great value of physical training not merely as an end in itself but as a vital necessity for the defence of the country. Your U.T.C. consists today of more than three hundred students. I should like to see this number increased until not a single student physically capable of training is left out. Heaven forbid that we should follow the aims and ideals of the Fascist countries, but there is no reason why we should not learn

some salutary lessons from them and one of the greatest of those lessons is the importance of the physical training of youth from the earliest age. The Youth Movement not only in Germany and Italy but also in Russia is the source and fountainhead of their physical might. If this country wishes to attain its rightful place in the comity of nations, it has to begin with the physical as well as mental education of its youth. May I with that end suggest the starting of Labour Corps in schools as a preliminary training ground for the University Training Corps?

Speaking to an audience such as this, and on an occasion so important as a Convocation for the conferment of Degrees, I may be permitted to discuss briefly the aims of higher education in India today. Sir S. Radhakrishnan says somewhere that, during the last war, a Professor at one of the Universities of Great Britain was asked *what* he was doing while the great fight for preserving civilization was going on, and he replied, "I am the civilization you are fighting for!" He was right; for the universities and the men of light and leading at the universities are the repositories and custodians of the civilization and culture not only of a nation but that of all humanity. The universities jealously guard and devoutly cherish all that is highest and noblest in the achievements of the human spirit in its unending quest after truth, beauty and righteousness.

"An intelligent man", says Plato, "will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness and wisdom." At no other time in the history of the world was the need for these values greater than now. In these days of storm and stress, when the foundations of society are shaken and the very fabric of our civilization seems to be crumbling, it more than ever behoves the youth of every nation to cultivate these values. The pursuit of knowledge with singleness and devotion, the discipline of the intellect, and the cultivation of higher moral standards ought to give to the students what has been aptly called 'the balanced mind.'

'The Dedicated Life' of which Lord Haldane speaks in his admirable book on universities and national life, not only requires that the student should scorn delight and live laborious days but also that, living as he does within the cloistered seclusion of a university, he should avoid entering into the heat and strife of the market-place. There is no question on which more divergent opinions have been expressed by responsible men in the public life of the country than this—if, and to what extent, students while they are at the university should play an active part in politics. Speaking as one who is neither a politician nor an educationist but simply as one interested in the welfare and progress of the youth of our country, I would ask you to remember that the period of your stay at the university is one of preparation for life. When the preparation is ended and you have passed out of the university, it will not only be your right and privilege but also your duty to take an active part in all movements for the welfare and advancement of your country, and when that time comes I know you will not be found wanting. But during the period of preparation, before your mind has acquired the balance and the sense of proportion that would enable you to judge right from wrong and to distinguish mere catchwords and shibboleths from true political wisdom, to rush into the active political arena would be injurious to yourself as well to the cause of your country. One of the virtues you acquire in the university is the virtue of restraint. The soberness, righteousness and wisdom, of which Plato speaks is incompatible with violence, prejudice and intolerance. You should cultivate a freedom from these passions as well as from petty jealousies and party rancour, so that, in the fullness of time, when you step out into the world, you can utilize the knowledge and culture, wisdom and virtue acquired during your years of preparation at the university for the service of your motherland.

If in India today our political and social problems have become more difficult of solution, if the ugly spirit of communalism is eating into the vitals of our national life, I believe it is partly because the universities of India have in some measure failed to achieve their object of promoting culture, and dispelling not only ignorance but passion and prejudice. It is from the universities of the nation that we have a right to expect the promotion of feelings of toleration, mutual understanding and sympathy between the various elements that compose the national life. And it is from the young men who leave these universities that we may demand a sane and balanced judgment, a just sense of higher values, a broad mental outlook and a universal sympathy. But "if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" A university will ultimately be judged by its success or failure in enlarging and liberating the mind of its students and developing in them an outlook that transcends the narrow barriers of race, caste and creed.

One of the aims of the University, as laid down in the charter of His Exalted Highness, is to give an impetus to research in all scientific subjects. As an industrialist connected with the management of a large Steel Works and brought into constant touch with men of science, I am naturally more interested in the scientific aspects of a university's activities than in the literary ones, without in any way minimizing the value and importance of the latter. The progress of science during the last one hundred years or so has proceeded at an amazing, and to some minds, an alarming pace. During that period, means of communication have improved at a faster rate than during all the centuries preceding it from the dawn of history. It has been stated that there is more power in a single modern tank than there was in the whole army of William the Conqueror; that more metal has been consumed in the world since 1914 than in all the years preceding it. These rapid strides in scientific development have brought with them complicated problems in the social, economic and political spheres which the world has been trying to solve with such tragic lack of success so far. Science has been blamed for war and inventing the horrible instruments of war. It is not science but the purposes to which science has been perverted by those in power which has led to the ills of humanity. If science can invent instruments of destruction, it can also invent those for the preservation of mankind and the alleviation and cure of human ills and suffering.

So highly have the potential energies of science been developed that it is within its power to repair all the havoc caused by the present war and within a few years to bring the world to a pitch of prosperity never experienced before, provided—and this is a very big proviso—the political and economic systems do not hamper its progress as they have hitherto done and the jealousies and greed of men do not lead them again to another orgy of bloodshed and devastation. The fact is that while in the realm of material science, mankind has progressed at such an amazing pace, morally and spiritually it has made very small progress during the last two thousand years. The development of the physical sciences has thus outstripped the development of the moral and social sciences and the conscience of men. The horrors and atrocities perpetrated during the present war might excite the envy of Chengiz Khan and leave the primitive savage aghast with horror. It is this one-sided development of human progress which has led some thinkers seriously to advocate a temporary halt in the further progress of physical science. While totally disagreeing with such a suggestion, I think that our universities ought to devote a larger measure of attention to the moral and sociological sciences, to a truer interpretation of political economy and political science and to a closer study of such subjects as mass psychology.

Your University has instituted the Ph. D. Degree in various subjects, including Mathematics, Zoology and Chemistry, to qualify for which research for not less than three years under the supervision of University Professors is necessary. You have a galaxy of research talent on the teaching staff of your University. In view of the vastly increased importance of the subjects, may I suggest that the Ph. D. Degree may be given in Applied Physics and that a Faculty of Technology may be added to the existing Faculties of the University?

Rightly or wrongly, for good or evil, this is the age of the machine and the history of the war has proved and is proving every day that it is only the scientifically developed countries which have highly organised industries which can hope to survive in the struggle for existence. The wonderful resistance of Russia which has evoked the admiration of the whole world has only been rendered possible through its extraordinary scientific and technological development since 1928. Even before the war, one per cent of the national income of Russia was spent on scientific research as compared with one third of one per cent by the United States of America and one-tenth of one per cent, by Great Britain. There were ten thousand Geologists in the country exploring every inch of its soil for minerals. Their labour has led to the vast development of the mining and metallurgical resources of Russia which has enabled it to survive such mighty blows to its heavy industries as the capture of the Don basin by the Germans in the war. The lesson for India is plain. It must embark upon an intensive programme of scientific and industrial development if it is to attain the position of a great independent country and to maintain it. It will be the duty and the privilege of the young scientists who are being trained in your University to help their country to achieve this position. There is a tremendous leeway to make up. India is primarily an agricultural country with sixty-seven per cent of its population engaged in agriculture and a bare ten per cent in industries. Though a certain amount of industrial develop-

ment has taken place under the impetus of the war, it is small compared to the industrial development of countries like Canada and Australia since the war. The whole economy of a country which depends to such a preponderating extent on agriculture is unbalanced and unsound. Such a country can never achieve a high standard of living. It lacks the amenities of civilization enjoyed by advanced industrial countries and, what is more important, renders itself incapable of self-defence in modern warfare. The average annual income per head of population in India as estimated in 1931 is Rs. 65 as compared with Rs. 980 of the United Kingdom and Rs. 1,387 of the United States of America. The absolute figures of income may have altered since then, but the disproportion is still as glaring as ever. Even in the field of agriculture which is the primary industry of India, due to the lack of scientific methods and the poverty of the cultivator, the yield of the principal crops is appallingly low, as compared with the yield in other countries. The yield of rice is 0.39 ton per acre as compared with 1.01 in the U.S.A., and 1.61 in Japan; the yield of sugar-cane is 12.66 tons per acre as compared with 20.06 in the U.S.A., and 54.91 in Java; the yield of cotton is .04 ton per acre as compared with .11 in the U.S.A., and .23 in Egypt. Even for an advanced country like Great Britain it was estimated before the war that the application of scientific methods and research could nearly double the produce of the land. Under the pressure of the economic blockade a great deal of progress has been made during the war in the application of scientific methods to British agriculture. If that is the position in a scientifically advanced country like Great Britain, imagine the scope for improvement in a country like India where scientific methods have barely been applied to agriculture in spite of the efforts of Government and of the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute, and where the yields are so poor. Here is a vast field for the student of scientific agriculture animated by a desire to improve the economic condition of the rural population.

I understand that the geological survey of this State has not yet been completed. A thorough geological survey of the resources of a country is the very basis of its industrial development and such a survey, which might provide a useful field of occupation for the geological students of this University, might be undertaken.

The basic and key industries are the foundation upon which the industrial development of a country must be based. The first requisite, as I have observed before, must be a thorough geological survey for exploring the mineral resources of a region. This must be accompanied by an investigation of the power resources, thermal and hydraulic, as they provide the motive power for the running of other industries. Communications require to be developed and the mining and metallurgical and engineering industries, according to the resources available, must be inaugurated. I may be pardoned for my presumption in touching upon these matters with regard to a State about whose resources I know so little. You have a Department of Technical and Vocational Education, a Technical College, a College of Arts and Crafts and an Industrial Research Laboratory devoted to these ends. I was shown a building nearing completion which is to accommodate a Polytechnic Institute. All these developments show that you have the industrial development of the State prominently in your mind. The provision of the sum of one crores of Rupees as an Industrial Trust Fund out of which industrial enterprise may be encouraged, is a wise and thoughtful measure on which I must tender my respectful congratulations to His Exalted Highness and his advisers. You have already helped in this way to start a number of industries in the State. In the Singareni Coalfields you have a valuable source of power and in the Nizam's State Railways you not only possess a good means of communication but also a large industrial undertaking which could well be the source of a number of engineering industries and the means of training engineers and technicians to staff them. From this point of view may I emphasize the need of devoting the utmost attention to the subject of mechanical and electrical engineering in your Engineering College, so as to equip your students as thoroughly as is done in any other university in India.

Regarding the consumption industries as distinguished from the capital goods industries, you have already a number of textile mills, sugar mills, paper mills, pharmaceutical works, etc. I have no doubt that under the guidance of your Government, these industries would be extended and new industries such as artificial silk, hosiery, leather and oil would be established in the near future. Looking to the resources of the State in raw materials, there appears to me to be a good scope for the establishment of the two latter industries. You have a large

number of flourishing cottage industries, arts and crafts. I should very much like to see a system adopted on the Japanese model by which cottage industries could be integrated to the large industries, so that some of the components of a large industry may be made in the villages and assembled in central towns. For this purpose an extension of communication and of cheap electrical power to the villages would be necessary.

With your permission I will turn now to a different topic which is uppermost in men's minds and hearts to-day. The world is passing through a crisis which is perhaps unprecedented in its history. It is said that we are witnessing the end of one epoch and the beginning of another. Many of us have passed not through one but two world wars. Well may some of us cry out against the hard fate of this generation as compared with the even tenor of the days of our fathers and yet to the strong of heart and spirit there is an inspiration and a stimulus to live in these days which our forefathers lacked. I am tempted to say to those who complain,

"Rejoice whatever anguish rend your heart
That God has given you for a priceless dower
To live in these great times and have your part
In freedom's crowning hour."

To us in India, there is superposed upon the world problem, our own internal problems which are no less difficult and distressing. Of the many lessons which the world conflict teaches us, I would select the following three :—

- (i) That unity is essential for safety ;
- (ii) That the day of the small states is passed ;
- (iii) That a narrow nationalism is a curse rather than a blessing.

Taking them up one by one, the whole history of the hectic period between the first world war and the second impresses upon us the need for unity in the interests of our own safety and happiness. The noble concept of a League of Nations was torpedoed almost as soon as it arose by the very nation in the mind of whose President it originated, because his country thought itself safe in its own isolation. Then followed the futile Kellogg Pact, the Locarno Pact, endless conferences regarding disarmament and the rising tide of encroachment by the Axis Powers culminating in the surrender of Munich and the crowning tragedy of the present war. At every stage it was clear that if the Powers had presented a united front to the aggressor, instead of each looking to its own fancied security and its own narrow interests, the whole course of history would have been changed.

One has only to look around and see the fate that has befallen Belgium, Holland, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Greece, Albania, and others, to be satisfied not only that these small states have ceased to exist but that in the future they cannot be resuscitated as completely independent sovereign states, because the technique of modern warfare requires a degree of scientific and industrial development which only a few large countries can possess. The small states can therefore exist only by entering into a federation with others and by surrendering a part of their sovereignty for the sake of their safety.

A narrow nationalism looking to its own interest regardless of the common welfare of the rest of the world led to tariff barriers, unilateral trade agreements, managed currencies, frozen credits and the numerous devices of international trade warfare which ultimately resulted in open armed conflict. Such nationalisms as well as the imperialisms which thrive upon the exploitation of weaker and less developed nations must give place to the larger concept of a world federation.

When we turn to India today, what do we find ? Have we learned the lessons which the tragedy of the world war is impressing upon us ? Are we united in resistance to the Axis aggressor ? Have we laid aside our petty jealousies and narrow sectarian interests for the common good ? Far from doing so, India today presents a spectacle of discord, disunity and frustration such as it has not done within the memory of any living man. To young men like you on the threshold of your careers in life, the problems that have to be faced, the future that is in store must present a spectacle at once terrifying and inspiring. Democracy or autocracy, capitalism or socialism, disruption or federation, unity or discord, strife or peace, these are great and fateful issues, and these issues are before you demanding solution with an insistence and urgency which was not before the young men of my generation. Upon the courage, wisdom, foresight and toleration, with which you tackle these problems, will depend the advancement and happiness of your country for countless generations to come.

A last and very pleasant duty still remains before me, and that is to offer

my congratulations to the Graduates of the year. You have obtained the hall-mark of the University, but may I remind you that you have made certain promises to-day to the Chancellor in open Convocation. You have promised to pursue truth, to cherish virtue and to disseminate the knowledge you have acquired among those who have not had the same opportunities as you have. In all your future progress through life, whatever befalls you, remember that the honour and fair name of your University are in your keeping. See that the honour is never strained, that the name is never tarnished. In life, the academic degree you obtain today may or may not be of value to you, but the culture you have acquired and the character you have developed will go with you through life. It is not the certificate that will gain you the respect and confidence of your fellowmen, but it is by your conduct and character that you will secure them.

The Osmania University will shortly be celebrating its Silver Jubilee. May I conclude by wishing it a long successful career of service to the State and to the cause of civilization and progress.

The Calcutta University Convocation

Dr. B. C. Roy's Address

"One of the main functions of the University is to produce leaders of thought and action, workers dedicated to the service of the Nation. The University is justly regarded as the citadel of Truth, the home of that freedom of the spirit which is True Liberty, Liberty to think, Liberty to speak, Liberty to teach." This remarkable observation was made by Dr. *Bihari Chandra Roy*, Vice-Chancellor, in the course of the forty five-minute address he delivered at the Convocation of the Calcutta University held on the 13th. March 1943.

In the course of his address Dr. *Roy* observed :

While I have alluded to the achievements of the different teaching departments of the University with some amount of justifiable pride, I am not unmindful of the fact that even well-intentioned critics have repeatedly pointed out our defects. Self-complacency should not blind us to our own faults, neither should we suffer from that ignorance which consists less in not knowing things than in ignoring things already known. The first defect pointed out by our critics is that the standard of our examinations is low and continues to be low and that our Graduates fare badly in any All-India competition. Let us pursue this point of view and find out if the University is directly or indirectly responsible for this state of affairs. If the percentage of passes in any group of examinations is any criterion of the standard of teaching given by the University to our students, I need only point out that during the year under review four of them obtained their Ph. D., five were admitted to the D.Sc. and two obtained the M. D. degree. Most of the examiners for these examinations were experts belonging to other provinces or countries and no question of favouritism could arise.

But our friends then argue somewhat as follows : The Calcutta University has become huge and unwieldy, and it admits thousands of students for the different University examinations, the standard of which, on account of the large numbers appearing at them, naturally has fallen low. Mr. *O'Malley*, in his latest book, "Modern India and the West," has returned to this charge in the following words, "Funds required by the Calcutta University, for teaching and research work, in so far as they are not supplied by private benefactors or by the grants grudgingly given by a Government which the University did little to conciliate, could only be provided by the success of the University as a business concern, the presentation of a large number at its examinations and the ultimate emergence of a large number of them for Post-Graduate study. The implications are obvious. But is the charge of admitting an unusually large number of candidates to the examination sustainable? Is the number inordinately high compared with that found in other countries? My friend and predecessor in office, Dr. *Syamaprasad Mookherji*, quoted some significant figures in this connection a few years ago. Calcutta University serves an area covering Bengal and Assam except an area served by Dacca University. The total population of the two provinces is over 65 millions. In this area 5½ lakh pupils study in the Secondary schools, 36,000 read in colleges, a

proportion of 1:17, the corresponding figures for England were 1:12, Canada 1:3, Germany 1:9, Italy and Japan 1:10. Compared with these figures the number of candidates reading in colleges in the Calcutta University is not disproportionately high. If the larger numbers in other countries do not indicate a low standard of education in them why should it be otherwise in Bengal? On the other hand, within the last 30 years although the numbers appearing at each examination have gone up 6 times, the average percentage of passes has remained the same. What remains then of Mr. O'Malley's assertion that this University works like a business concern, anxious to secure quantity at the sacrifice of quality? But yet the critics persist and point out the significant fact that in any All-India competition, Bengal students fare very badly, which shows that our boys are poorly equipped and badly trained. Either the institutions are inadequately provided and their teachers are incompetent, or the pupils of these 1,600 schools come to them so deficient in their training in the Primary stages, that they are incapable of benefiting by the instructions given to them. Let us concede for a moment the correctness of both propositions; personally I feel that our boys to-day show poor competitive merit and that both the factors are responsible for it to a certain extent. But if the boys receive defective training in their Primary classes, is the University responsible for this? Whose duty is to ensure suitable and sufficient Primary education for our children? On the other hand, if the Secondary institutions are not able to employ properly trained teachers it is because most of the 16,00 schools recognised by the University exist mainly on their fee income; State aid, when available, is very meagre. Most of these institutions are started and conducted with non-official efforts and enthusiasm, and the vastness of the number is itself an indication of the insatiable public demand for Secondary education. The arrangements for training teachers are meagre; there is no planned scheme for providing commercial, industrial or agricultural education, with the result that every boy has to prepare for University education, whether he is suited for it or not. What is really wanted, to remedy this defect, is not the sudden curtailment of the number of institutions, so as to reduce the totality of pupils attending them—a retrograde measure quite unsuited to meet the public demand, but to improve them by more liberal grants from the State on the one hand and to switch on a large bulk of pupils to others types of studies more suited to them. The problem of education should be approached as a whole, from the Primary to the Post-Graduate stages, adequate funds provided for them, and a complete planned programme be adopted and followed for a large number of years. And this problem is not peculiar to this country and province. Speaking of the schools of England 15 years ago, Mr. Fisher, the then Minister of Education, said, "The wrong things are being taught in the wrong way by the wrong people. But if so, who is responsible? The culprit is the nation." I am sure, as soon as the Nation in this country has an effective and conclusive voice in the matter, it will demand and secure a more effective form of Primary education, a well planned Secondary education sufficiently diversified to meet all tastes and talents, and a liberally endowed and co-ordinated University education.

This brings me to the next subject for discussion. We are repeatedly told that this University, although its activities have multiplied and expanded beyond recognition, such as would demand the full attention of the authorities, are loath to part with power and desire to keep control over secondary schools, a control which they exercise very perfunctorily. But who, may I ask, gave this authority to the University? The Act of Incorporation and the subsequent Statutes enjoined this duty on the University. This control, to my mind, was given in pursuance of the policy laid down by Macaulay, in his famous Despatch, that the Act "was to create a body of highly educated men, from which education will filter downwards ultimately to the masses." Be that as it may, the fact remains that the University have always declared that they would gladly hand over the duty of looking after schools to a properly constituted Board. Barring my revered friend Sir U. N. Brahmachari, who is present here, I happen to be the seniormost Fellow present in the hall to-day. I have seen the working of the University in all its branches during the last thirty years and no one is more conscious than I am of the fact that the Syndicate, with its present duties and responsibilities, cannot do justice to the task of properly directing the School education, particularly when the responsibilities are divided; practically, the whole inspection is done by the Governmental agencies and the books are prescribed partly by the Government and partly by the University. In 1926, Sir Ewart Greaves, the then Vice-Chancellor, urged that, both in the interests of the University and in the interests of the Schools, a

Secondary Education Board should be established at an early date. Since then and even from before that date, many fruitless attempts have been made for the establishment of a Board of Secondary Education. I understand that a new Bill was introduced in the present Assembly and is now being considered by a Select Committee. The University have not been consulted on this occasion regarding the terms of the Bill. But now, as always, the attitude of the University has been that a properly constituted Board should be established at an early date which should be an independent body, on which and on whose effective executive committees, the University should have adequate representation, so that there may be continuity of educational policy and objective in the School and Collegiate stages. The Board should have sufficient funds to open up new branches of study, particularly in the vocational line, which would relieve the congestion of the colleges. Lastly, if and when the Board takes over the conduct of the Matriculation examination full compensation should be paid to the University for the financial loss sustained by it. I am afraid that so long as an educational measure continues to be a game of bagatelle of the prevailing political bodies, there is little chance of an effective or early result.

The next defect that our well-meaning critics point out is that while our students get their distinctions in different branches of study, while the bounds of their investigation extend even beyond the geographical limits of Asia, while their enquiries are extended to whatever is performed by man and produced by Nature, they have not established that contact with the masses which was aimed at by those who introduced University Education in this country. Sir *Asutosh*, a few months before his death, observed, as a result of mature judgment and close observation, "The Indian Universities have not been able to take root in the life of the Nation because they have been exotics." One great drawback in our education had been that it was, and has been until recent years, given through the medium of English. Macaulay, who was the author of the scheme, aimed "at creating a body of Indians who would, among other things, refine the vernacular dialects of the country and by enriching them with the terms of science, borrowed from the nomenclature of the West, render them, by degrees, fit vehicles for carrying knowledge to the great mass of the population." Sir *James William Colville*, who was appointed the first Vice-Chancellor to give effect to this scheme, thus further expounded this point of view. "Those who first undertook the task of transferring the treasure of Western learning and Western science into the Oriental mind, had to choose between conveying instructions through the medium of the English language or through the medium of vernacular. They chose the first method which unlocks the whole treasure house but we must not neglect the other method; on the contrary, use it more and more as occasion offers if we wish the education which we give to strike deep root or to extend over a wide surface." One of the main functions of the University is to produce leaders of thought and action, workers dedicated to the service of the Nation.

The University is justly regarded as the citadel of Truth, the home of that freedom of the spirit which is True Liberty. Liberty to think, Liberty to speak, Liberty to teach. No votary in this temple, no alumnus of the University could take his due share in shaping the New World to be, unless he receives the benefits of a well-planned moral instruction. It is unfortunate that in this country, a University teacher may be severed from the religious sympathies of the taught and must either be silent on the relations of man to a higher world or, if he discusses them, be suspiciously heard or imperfectly understood. And yet how otherwise could a young man get that discipline which would make him a self-governing Being, not a being governed by others. If young men cannot govern themselves, what effective share can they take in the New Reconstruction of the world where there will be—

Freedom from Fear
Freedom from Want
Freedom of Speech
Freedom of Religion.

We hear now-a-days a great deal about Democracy. It is not merely a form of government or a system of holding elections. It is defined as the principle of Freedom of respect for and assurance of human rights. The future leaders of the country will be able to appreciate and respect this principle to the extent they are disciplined, self-governed, self-restrained and self-reliant.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

July 1943	1
August 1943	7
September 1943	12
October 1943	...	...	18
November 1943	...	...	23
December 1943	...	...	30

INDIA IN HOME POLITY—JULY TO DECEMBER 1943

Famine in Bengal, old and new	...	...	35
The late Governor's responsibility	...	...	36
Signs and portents of famine	...	...	36
Ignored by Linlithgow Government	...	...	37
Transfer of holding by peasants	...	...	37
Value of civilian life	...	...	38
Bureaucratic brief & Bengal Ministry	...	...	38
Lack of candour of Linlithgow administration	...	...	39
Bureaucratic ignorance	...	...	40
Maladjustment in Indian society	...	...	40
Mr. Amery's uncomfortable position	...	...	41
Diseases and medical supplies	...	...	42
Did Government follow the "Famine Code,"	...	...	42
Diseases and its treatment	...	...	43
Bengal Government & Ministry	...	...	43
The non-official Europeans	...	...	44
The I. C. S. at Writers' Building	...	...	44
The Nazimuddin Ministry	...	...	45
What people think of Sir Nazimuddin	...	...	45
Profession & practice	...	...	46
Mr. Suhrawardy's acknowledgment	...	...	46
Government Profiteering	...	...	47
Government agents & price of rice	...	...	47
Muslim community & communal appeals	...	...	48
Muslim community in profession & trade	...	...	49
Muslims in distributive trades	...	...	49
Muslim separatism—its birth	...	...	50
Fighting famine combined with establishing Muslims in trade	...	...	50
Nazimuddin Ministry an instrument of Linlithgow policy	...	...	51
Food Members and their susceptibility to official brief	...	...	52
Complacency and suspicion of Indian bonafide	...	...	53
Their inevitable result	...	...	54
Death from Famine & Pestilence	...	...	54

Food and Disease	...	...	54
No Census of deaths from these causes	...	...	56
Years & decades of malnutrition	...	...	56
How and Why they die	...	...	56
How came this spirit of Resignation	...	...	57
The New generation must find the answer	...	...	57
Youth in Bengal & Call to social service	...	...	58
How Famine perverts human nature	...	...	58
Relief and Brahmo Samaj	...	...	59
Communalism in Famine Relief	...	...	59
The Women's organisations	...	...	59
Immensity of the Disaster	...	...	61
State & other relief compared to charity	...	...	61
Help came from far and near	...	...	62
The masses of Britain do not understand	...	...	62
Lord Wavell as economic saviour	...	...	63
Sterling Balances and their repayment	...	...	64
How these debts may disappear	...	...	65
Mutual suspicion and distrust	...	...	65
Churchmen's appeal for renewal of faith	...	...	66
The Phillips episode	...	...	67
Why Government was in no mood for reconciliation	...	...	67
Germany at bay	...	...	68
German Strategy	...	...	68
The failure of German High Command	...	...	69
German "Heartland" approached	...	...	69
The Teheran Conference	...	...	69
The Cairo Conference	...	...	70
Fight against Japan	...	...	70
Sorrows & sufferings of China	...	...	71
Hopeless hope in India	...	...	72
THE COUNCIL OF STATE			73
MONSOON SESSION—NEW DELHI—2ND TO 31ST AUGUST 1943			73
Congratulation to Lord Wavell	...	...	73
Difference in pay of army officers	...	...	73
South African Pegging Legislation	...	...	74
Reconstitution of Hindu Law	...	...	75
Alarming position of Cattle	...	...	76
Reciprocity Act Amend. Bill	...	...	77
Debate on the Food situation	...	...	77, 81 82
Export of Rice from Calcutta	...	...	80
Delhi University Bill	...	...	80
AUTUMN SESSION—NEW DELHI—15TH. TO 24TH. NOVEM. 1943			82
Monetary help to Bengal	...	...	82
Modification of Cripps Proposals	...	...	87
Charges against detenus	...	...	87
THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY			87
MONSOON SESSION—NEW DELHI—26TH. JULY TO 25TH. AUG. 1943			87
Adjournment Motions fail	...	...	87
Reciprocity Act Amend Bill	...	...	88

Official Bills introduced	...	...	88
Air Raids on India	...	...	88
Indian Prisoners in Japanese hands	...	...	88
Number of Detenus	...	...	88
Treatment of Political Prisoners	...	...	89
Civic rights for Harijans	...	...	90
Non-official Bills	...	...	90
Official Bills	...	...	91
Attack on Mr. Jinnah	...	...	91
South African Pegging Legislation	...	...	91
H. E. The Viceroy's Address	...	...	92
Reciprocity Act Amend Bill	...	...	95
Delhi University Amend Bill	...	...	96, 97, 104
Number of Detenus	...	...	96
Debate on the Food Situation	...	...	97
Assembly Uproar—Secret session not held	...	...	102
Debate on Currency policy	...	...	103
War Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Bill	...	...	103
AUTUMN SESSION—NEW DELHI—8TH. TO 19TH. NOV. 1943			107
Viceroy's Message to Assembly	...	...	107
Coal Rationing Scheme	...	...	108
Foodgrains despatch to Calcutta	...	...	108
Indian Delegation to Britain	...	...	108
Trades Unions Act Amend. Bill	...	...	109
Statement on Food for India	...	...	109
Stabilization of Prices	...	...	110
Hindu Marriages between same Gotra	...	...	111
Blair's retirement & Hitavada Order	...	...	111
Number of Security Prisoners	...	...	112
Debate on Food Situation	...	...	112, 114
Trade Unions Act Amend Bill	...	...	113
Other Official Bills	...	...	114
Scheduled castes & army	...	...	125
THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY			126
JULY SESSION—CALCUTTA—5TH. JULY TO 14TH. JULY 1943			126
Mr. Fazlul Huq's statement on Resignation	...	...	126
Differences over repressive policy	...	...	126
Inside story of the resignation	...	...	127
Governor's partizan zeal	...	...	128
Mr. Huq's letter to Governor	...	...	128
Interference in administration	...	...	129
"Act as a true statesman"	...	...	129
Food Policy	...	...	130
Cabinet expansion	...	...	131
Orders passed without consulting Cabinet	...	...	131
Mr. Huq's visit to Feni	...	...	131
Midnapore Affairs	...	...	132
Budget Demands Ruled out	...	...	133
Release of Political Prisoners	...	...	134
Debate on Food Situation	...	...	134

AUTUMN SESSION—CALCUTTA—14TH. TO 28TH. SEPT. 1943	142
Financial Statement for 1943-44	142
Minister's Statement on Food situation	142
Detention of Security Prisoners	144
Debate of Food Situation	148
General Discussion of Budget	151
Demand for declaration of famine in Bengal	152
Disappearance of rice from Market	154
Treatment of Security Prisoners	155
Minister's statement on Food situation	156
Food crisis—Charge against Ispahanis	159
Conduct of Chief Justice criticised	162
Mr. Pollard's case	163
Allegations of higher prices of foodstuffs	163
Debate on Food situation	165
Non-official Bills	168
THE PUNJAB LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	169
AUTUMN SESSION—LAHORE—1ST. TO 9TH. NOV. 1943	169
Mr. Jalaluddin Amber's death	169
Congress Detenus & Security Prisoners	169
Releases	169
Concession to C. D. Prisoners	170
Adjournment motions ruled out	170
Maternity Benefit Bill	170
Trade Employees Bill	171
District Boards Bill	171
Sikh Gurdwara (Amend.) Bill	172
Debate on Food situation	173
Supplementary demands voted	178
Punjab Land alienation (Amend.) Bill	179
Adjournment Motions ruled out	181
Tobacco Vend Fees Bill	181
Immovable Property Tax Bill	181
Sugar-cane Bill	181
Cess burden on growers	182
THE N. W. F. PR. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	183
BUDGET SESSION—PESHAWAR—17TH. TO 27TH. AUG. 1943	183
Financial Statement for 1943-44	183
Budget presented	183
Introduction of official bills	184
Condolence to Deceased members	184
Sikh Religious endowments bill	184
General Discussion of Budget	184
Non-Official Resolutions	185
Voting on Budget Demands	185
Non-Official Resolutions	186
Interpellations	186
LAWS PASSED IN 1943	187
Government of Bengal	187
" of Punjab	188

Government of Orissa	...	...	189
" of Assam	...	...	189
" of Sind	...	...	190
" of Bombay	...	...	192
" of Madras	...	...	193
" of United Provinces	...	...	196
" of C. P. & Berar	...	...	197
" of Bihar	...	...	197
" of N. W. F. Province	...	...	198
CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR AUGUST DISTURBANCES 1942-43			200
GANDHIJI'S LETTERS TO WAVELL	...	...	200
"Quit India" Stand Explained	...	...	200
Text of Correspondence	...	...	200
Gandhiji's Demand for Impartial Tribunal	...	...	200
"Self-Satisfaction" Bodes Ill	...	...	200
Gandhiji's Reply	...	...	201
Tribute to Shri Kasturba	...	...	201
British Policy and "Quit India" Demand	...	...	202
Withdrawal of August Resolution	...	...	202
"Put me in touch with Working Committee"	...	...	203
Indian Soldiers not "Volunteers"	...	...	203
Viceroy Invited to meet Detained Leaders	...	...	203
Detention of Shri Miraben	...	...	204
Lord Wavell's Letter	...	...	204
Criticism of Congress Policy	...	...	205
"Cannot Hold Congress Guiltless"	...	...	205
Must Abandon Non-Co-Operation	...	...	205
Gandhiji's Last Letter	...	...	205
August Crisis Created by Government	...	...	206
"Martial Law is the Whole of India"	...	...	206
"India One Vast Prison"	...	...	206
Gandhi—Lilithgow Correspondence	...	...	207
CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISTURBANCES 1942-43			207
GANDHI'S REPLY TO GOVERNMENT INDICTMENT	...	...	207
Prosecutor, Police men and Jailor	...	...	208
Search for Motives	...	...	209
Nothing to Withdraw	...	...	210
Position of Foreign Troops	...	...	211
Provisional National Government	...	...	212
Prostration of Great Nation	...	...	212
Exploitation of Policy of Non-Embarrassment	...	...	213
British Propaganda in America	...	...	214
Lessons of Burma & Russia	...	...	215
The Allahabad Draft Resolution	...	...	215
Free India A Real Ally	...	...	217
Complete Non-Co-operation with Aggressors	...	...	218
Tolerance of Allied Troops	...	...	221
Defence of India	...	...	222
No "Secret Methods"	...	...	223
"Scorched Earth"	...	...	223

Solicitude for the Masses	...	...	224
Gandhiji's Appeal to Japs	...	...	225
India's Freedom Main Concern	...	...	226
Official 'Distortions'	...	...	226
A Misreport	...	...	227
Government Invited The Crisis	...	...	228
Anxiety To Avoid Conflict	...	...	228
No Arbitration of the Independence Issue	...	...	228
"Actual Struggle not Commenced"	...	...	229
"Do or Die"	...	...	229
"Cruel Misrepresentation"	...	...	230
Free India As An Ally	...	...	230
Non-Party Character of Congress	...	...	231
Administration's "Dead-Set Against Congress"	...	...	231
Congress And War Issue	...	...	232
Gross Misquotations	...	...	232
And Post-Facto Meanings	...	...	232
"An Unpardonable Suppression"	...	...	233
Use of Military Terms in Non-Violence	...	...	233
Analogy of the Salvation Army	...	...	233
Non-Violent Record of Civil Resistance	...	...	234
Violence Ruled out By Working Committee	...	...	234
Stayagraha—The World's Hope	...	...	234
Reply to Charge of "Lip Service"	...	...	235
Students and the Congress	...	...	235
The "Detailed Instructions"	...	...	235
No Violent Intention	...	...	236
The Andhra Circular	...	...	236
"Non-Violence as I know it"	...	...	237
Aims of Wardha Resolution	...	...	237
Arrests of Leaders the Cause	...	...	238
"Would have Strained to make Negotiations successful"	...	...	238
Govt. Autocracy Vs. Congress Democracy	...	...	239
"Quit India"—A cry of Anguish	...	...	239
Sincerity of Government's Professions Doubted	...	...	240
Action Against Constructive Workers Criticised	...	...	240
"Withdraw The Indictment"	...	...	240
GANDHI-TOTTENHAM CORRESPONDENCE			241
SIR R. TOTTENHAM'S LETTER	...	...	241
"Defeatist Outlook Towards Jap Threat"	...	...	241
Gandhiji Accused of Incredible Levity	...	...	242
Reference to "Open Rebellion"	...	...	243
Mahatma Gandhi's reply	...	...	243
Desire to discuss with Working Committee	...	...	243
Refer charges to an impartial tribunal	...	...	244
Request to meet with colleagues rejected	...	...	244
Stoppage of letter to Mr. Jinnah	...	...	244
Gandhiji's complaint to Sir R. Tottenham	...	...	244
Official reply	...	...	245
GANDHI-MAXWELL CORRESPONDENCE			246
Mahatma Gandhi's Letter to Maxwell	...	...	246

"Hope" from Japanese	...	...	246
Fast not to secure release	...	...	247
"Begged Government not to be a damned fool"	...	...	247
Armed with a resolution	...	...	249
Negotiation with rebels	...	...	249
No facts but opinions	...	...	250
Maxwell's reply	...	...	250
GANDHI—SAMUEL CORRESPONDENCE			251
Gandhi's letter to Lord Samuel	...	...	251
THE ALL INDIA HINDU MAHASABHA			256
WORKING COMMITTEE—BOMBAY—7TH. & 8TH AUGUST 1943			256
TEXT OF RESOLUTIONS	...	...	256
Savarkar elected President	...	...	256
Sympathy with Mrs Gandhi	...	...	256
Vikrama—Jayanti celebrations	...	...	256
Jaipur Affairs	...	...	256
RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—8TH. AUGUST 1943	...	...	257
Coalition Ministries	...	...	257
Moslem Immigration in Assam	..	...	258
Slaughter of Cattle	...	...	258
Condolence resolution	...	...	258
Muslim rights in Hindu States	...	...	258
Food situation	...	...	258
MAHASABHA SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS			259
AMRITSAR—25TH. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	259
Cossimbazar Maharaja's Address	...	...	259
License for Procession cancelled	...	...	260
District Magistrates Communique	...	...	260
THE OPEN SESSION OF THE HINDU MAHASABHA			261
SILVER JUBILEE SESSION—AMRITSAR—26TH. DECEMBER 1943			261
THE WELCOME ADDRESS	...	...	261
The Presidential Address	...	...	262
The Deadly War	...	...	263
Indian Problem in cold storage	...	...	264
Uncompromising attitude	...	...	265
Several Fields of Activity	...	...	266
Silver Lining	...	...	267
RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—27TH. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	268
Condolence resolution	...	...	268
Hindu Sangathan Movement	...	...	269
Mahasabha and Political Negotiations	...	...	270
Satyarthha Prakasa	...	...	270
Vivisection opposed	...	...	271
RESOLUTIONS—THIRD DAY—28TH. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	271
Grievances of Hindus	...	...	272
Political Situation	...	...	273
Hindi banned among detenus	...	...	274

Bengal Famine	...	...	275
Lathi Charge	...	...	275
Other resolutions	...	...	276
THE A. I. HINDU STUDENTS' CONFERENCE			277
SECOND SESSION—AMRITSAR—28TH. DECEMBER 1943	...		277
Presidential Address	...	...	277
THE ASSAM PROVINCIAL HINDU SABHA			279
Muslim Penetration in Assam	...	...	279
THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE			281
COUNCIL MEETING—NEW DELHI—14TH NOVEMBER 1943			281
Mr. Jinnah re-elected president	...	...	281
Mr. Jinnah's Address	...	...	281
PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS	...	...	282
Punjab Assembly League Party's position	...	...	282
Objection to portions of "Satyarthha Prakasa"	...	...	282
League members and Khaskar organisation	...	...	283
System of Mandates should end	...	...	283
Lebanon Developments	...	...	283
Palestine questions	...	...	284
RESOLUTIONS—SECOND DAY—NEW DELHI—15TH. NOV. 1943			284
Food Situation in India	...	...	284
WORKING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—13TH. NOV. 1943			287
Muslim Premiers take part in discussion	...	...	287
Palestine Question	...	...	287
THE OPEN SESSION OF THE LEAGUE			288
31ST. SESSION—KARACHI—24TH DECEMBER 1943	...		288
The Welcome Address	...	...	288
Mr Jinnah's Presidential Address	...	...	289
Food Problem	...	...	289
Attitude of Hindus	...	...	290
Viceroy's Appeal for co-op ration	...	...	290
Voluntary Liquidation of Empire	...	...	291
Criticism of Congress policy	...	...	291
SECOND DAY—KARACHI—25TH. DECEMBER 1943	...		292
Resolutions—on Pakistan	...	...	292
Committee to prepare 5-year programme	...	...	293
"Satyarthha Prakasa"	...	...	294
THIRD DAY—KARACHI—26TH. DECEMBER 1943	...		295
Effective Price control	...	...	295
Bengal's plight	...	...	295
Demand for Election to Legislatures	...	...	296
Mr Jinnah's concluding address	...	...	297
FOURTH DAY—KARACHI—27TH. DECEMBER 1943	...		297
Committee of Action appointed	...	...	297
Parliamentary Board	...	...	297

THE ALL INDIA AHRAR CONFERENCE	298
SPECIAL SESSION—LAHORE—4TH. & 5TH. DECEMBER 1943	298
Proceedings and Resolutions	298
THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM MUJLIS MANIFESTO	299
THE SIKH CONFERENCERS	301
THE ANTI—AZAD PUNJAB CONFERENCE	301
Azad Punjab Scheme condemned	301
The Attock Akali Conference	301
The Dhundial Sikh Conference	301
THE AKHAND HINDUSTHAN CONFERENCE	301
CHAKWAL—15TH. DECEMBER 1943	302
The Presidential Address	302
The Chairman's Address	302
Azad Punjab Scheme condemned	302
THE A.I. AKHAND HINDUSTHAN CONFERENCE	303
The Presidential Address	303
THE PUNJAB & FRONTIER AKHAND HINDUSTHAN CONFERENCE	304
Mr. Duggal's Address	305
Presidential Address	305
Proceedings and Resolutions	306
THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION OF INDIA	308
24TH. SESSION—BOMBAY—29TH. DECEMBER 1943	308
Welcome Address	308
Presidential Address	309
Proceedings and Resolutions	312
SECOND DAY—BOMBAY—30TH. DEC. 1943	312
Need for ending Deadlock	312
The Political Situation	312
India's representation on Peace Conference	315
The Bengal Famine	315
Food Situation in India	316
Mr. Casey's Appointment	317
THIRD DAY—BOMBAY—31ST. DEC. 1943	317
South African Pegging Legislation	317
Post-war Reconstruction	317
Responsible Govt. in Indian States	318
THE A. I. NEWS—PAPER EDITOR'S CONFERENCE	319
STANDING COMMITTEE—BOMBAY—14TH.—& 15TH. JULY 1943	319
Growing rigours of censorship	319
Sir Sultan Ahmed's Address	319
Mr. K. Srinivasan's reply	322
RESOLUTIONS—2ND. DAY—BOMBAY—15TH. JULY 1943	324
Advertisements in the Press	324
Sir Sultan Ahmed's Assurances	324
STANDING COMMITTEE—NEW DELHI—6TH. NOV. 1943	325
Protest against order on "Hitavada"	325

Protest against order on Sind Paper	...	...	325
THE CHAMBER OF PRINCES			325
NINETEENTH SESSION—NEW DELHI—14TH. OCT. 1943	...	...	325
H. E. The Viceroy address	...	...	325
RESOLUTIONS—2ND DAY—NEW DELHI, 15TH. OCT. 1943			333
States and War Effort	...	...	333
Chancellor's Address	...	...	333
H. E. The Viceroy's reply	...	...	335
THE ASSOCIATED CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE			335
ANNUAL MEETING—CALCUTTA—20TH. DEC. 1943	...	...	335
Chairman's Speech	...	...	335
H. E. The Viceroy's Address	...	...	336
PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS	...	...	342
Income-Tax Tribunal	...	...	342
Rent Restriction Order	...	...	343
Excess Profits Tax	...	...	343
Self-sufficiency in food	...	...	343
Post-War reconstruction	...	...	344
Post-war Trade Policy	...	...	344
War Risks Insurance	...	...	344
Import of Capital Goods	...	...	345
Claims in respect of damaged property	...	...	345
Trunk Telephone Services	...	...	345
Trade-Marks Act	...	...	345
THE INDIAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE			346
26TH. SESSION—MADRAS—30TH. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	346
Welcome Address	...	...	346
Presidential Address	...	...	348
PROCEEDINGS AND RESOLUTIONS	...	...	350
Control Problems	...	...	350
Rice Rationing in city	...	...	351
SECOND DAY—MADRAS—31ST. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	352
Price control and Rationing	...	...	352
Regulation of Banking	...	...	352
THIRD DAY—MADRAS—1ST. JANUARY 1944	...	...	353
Control of Inflation	...	...	353
Need for Co-ordinated Scheme	...	...	354
Political Deadlock—A Handicap	...	...	354
THE ALL INDIA PHILOSOPHIC CONGRESS			355
18TH. SESSION—LAHORE—31ST. DECEMBER 1943	...	...	355
Sir Manoharlal's opening address	...	...	355
Principal Chatterji's address	...	...	356
Presidential Address	...	...	357
INDIAN DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT			359
HOUSE OF LORDS—LONDON—20TH. OCTOBER 1943	...	...	359
Debate on Food Situation in India	...	...	359

Earl of Huntingdon's speech	...	...	359
Lord Catto's Speech	...	...	360
Lord Strabolgi's speech	...	...	361
Lord Munster's speech	...	...	362
HOUSE OF COMMONS—LONDON—4TH NOVEMBER 1943	...	...	365
Debate on Food Situation in India	...	...	365
Mr. Pethick Lawrence's speech	...	...	365
Mr. Leopold Amery's speech	...	...	367
Sir John Anderson's Speech	...	...	373
Mr. Hore Belisha's speech	...	...	377
Sir John Wardlaw Milne's speech	...	...	379
Sir Alfred Knox's speech	...	...	379
Mr. Graham White's Speech	...	...	379
Mr. Ridley's speech	...	...	380
THE CONVOCATION ADDRESSES			381
S. N. D. INDIAN WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			381
Sir Chimanlal Setalvad's Address	...	...	381
THE MADRAS UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			383
D. B. P. Venkatramana Rao Naidu's address	...	...	383
THE MYSORE UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			385
Sir J. C. Ghosh's address	...	...	385
THE TRAVANCORE UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			386
Sir Brojendra Lal Mitra's Address	...	...	386
THE PATNA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			388
Dr. M. R. Jayakar's Address	...	...	388
THE ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			389
Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy's Address	...	...	389
THE ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			392
Sir Shanmukham Chetti's address	...	...	392
THE ANDHRA UNIVERSITY CONVOCTION			394
Mr. S. V. Ramamurthi's address	...	...	394
THE DACCA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			396
Dr. M. Hassan's address	...	...	396
THE AGRA UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			397
Pt. Amar Nath Jha's address	...	...	397
THE BENARES UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			401
Pt. Hriday Nath Kunzru's address	...	...	401
THE NAGPUR UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			405
Sir Homi Mody's address	...	...	405
THE PUNJAB UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			408
Revd. G. D. Barne's address	...	...	408
THE DELHI UNIVERTITY CONVOCATION			412
Sir Maurice Gwyer's address	...	...	412
THE ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION			415
Sir M. Azizul Huque's address	...	...	415

Chronicle of Events

July 1943

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, stated in the House of Commons, re: India's food position: "There is no overall shortage of foodgrains.....There is, however, grave maldistribution for which the responsibility is shared by all parties from the cultivator upwards."

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery and Field Marshal Lord Wavell welcomed in London 34 young officers of the I. A. F. who arrived in England for operational experience under the Empire Training Scheme.

His Excellency the Viceroy addressed the Food Conference in New Delhi and was followed by Sir Azizul Haque, Food Minister. The Conference recorded the views of all provincial and State representatives regarding the food situation in the country.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, at the opening meeting of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, made a statement re: his resignation as Chief Minister of Bengal. He made some allegations against the Governor and charged him with partisanship and violation of the Instrument of Instructions.

The Government of India's decisions on measures to meet the food situation were announced to the Food Conference by Sir Azizul Haque, Food Member. The decisions inter alia were: Rationing in urban areas to be taken up in a progressively increasing measure and almost immediately. Free Trade not to be considered except as an objective for the return of normal conditions.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the Government of Bengal's handling of the food problem, was severely criticized. Nine special motions were moved by members of the different Opposition parties.

Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said that the difficulties of the food situation in India were due to the widespread tendency of cultivators to withhold foodgrains from the market.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, a resolution urging the release of Mahatma Gandhi and members of the Congress Working Committee, "to resolve the Indian deadlock" was passed.

His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir appointed a Commission of Inquiry under the presidency of Chief Justice Ganganath. The Commission would consist of eight Hindus, eight Muslims, one Sikh and one Buddhist,—the members were selected principally from the Praja Sabha.

The Standing Committee of the Non-Party Leaders' Conference issued a statement from New Delhi, appealing to the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi to close "the dismal chapter of strife and ill-feeling" in the country.

The Working Committee of the Provincial Hindu Mahasabha, under the presidency of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, adopted a

resolution protesting against the statement of Mr. Amery made in the House of Commons re : Indian food situation, and characterising it as misleading and adding insult to injury.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All India Muslim League, was attacked with a knife in Bombay, by a Muslim visitor.

The Central Legislative Assembly began its monsoon session. Sir Mohammad Azizul Haque, Sir Asoka Roy and Dr. N. B. Khare, the three new members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, were sworn in.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, President, All India Hindu Mahasabha, announced his resignation of the presidentship, in Bombay.

1st. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, gave details of India's food position in the House of Commons in reply to a question whether he had any statement to make about the food shortage in that country.

Mr. Amery said : "The basic facts have not changed. There is no overall shortage of food grains, while India has harvested a bumper crop of wheat this spring. There is, however, grave maldistribution for which the responsibility is shared by all parties, from the cultivator upwards ?"

Education in India was discussed in the House of Commons when Mr. R. Sorenson (Labour) suggested providing educational facilities for all Indian children within 20 years of the cessation of hostilities. He also wanted drastic reductions in adult illiteracy.

Mr. Amery said that the desire for the educational progress in India was fully shared by the Indian Government and the legislatures in whom the responsibility in this field was vested.

In the House of Commons, Mr. S. S. Silverman (Labour) asked Mr. Amery, Secretary State for India, if he was aware that reports of whipping for offences arising out of or in connexion with political disturbances showed that in three districts of Sind alone 800 such penalties had been inflicted during the past three months.—Mr. Amery said that he had no information, but if Mr. Silverman would communicate the source of his information he would make inquiries.

The Government of Madras passed the Madras Potato (Dealers and Transport) Control Order : the Order to take effect from the 1st July, 1943. Under the Order, no person should carry on business as a wholesale dealer in potatoes or store for sale potatoes in wholesale quantities in the Nilgiri district or in the Kodaikanal taluk of the Madura district under a license issued under the Control Order.

2nd. The first Government food shop in Calcutta was opened by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Minister of Civil Supplies at Tiljala.

H. E. Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras, at two public meetings at Penukonda and Anantpur, expressed the view that he personally, and the Government of Madras in conjunction with the Central Government and other Provincial Governments, would spare no pain in improving the food situation in the presidency.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery, and Field Marshal Lord Wavell welcomed in London 34 young officers of the I. A. F., the first group to arrive in England for operational experience under the Empire Training Scheme.

3rd. The National Defence Council met at the Viceroy's Council (New Delhi). His Excellency the Viceroy presided. His Excellency the Commander-in-chief reviewed the war situation.

The All-India Yarn and Cloth Merchants' Conference, convened to consider the control measures placed by the Government on the cloth and yarn industry and trade met in Bombay, Seth Govardhandas Gokuldas Morarji presided.

4th. The All-India Yarn and Cloth Merchants' Conference discussed the Textile Control Scheme and before concluding its session in Bombay, passed eighteen regulations touching on different aspects of the Control as it affected the wholesale and retail trade, and appointed a Standing Committee "to take all necessary steps to safeguard the interests of cloth and yarn dealers."

5th. The Food Conference which commenced in New Delhi, recorded the views of all Provincial and State representatives regarding the prevailing situation and

their difficulties. His Excellency the Viceroy addressed the Conference, followed by an opening speech by Sir Azizul Haque, Food Member.

At the opening meeting of the Monsoon Session of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, a statement on the circumstances connected with his resignation as Chief Minister of Bengal was made by Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.—He made some allegations against the Governor and charged him with partisanship and violation of the Instrument of Instructions. Mr. Huq suggested that the Governor might address the House and let the members have his version of the incidents.—Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee and Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed also made statements.

A statement by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Civil Supplies Minister, on the food situation, was placed before the House by the Chief Minister, Khawaja Sir Nazimuddin.

- 6th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, a point of order, involving constitutional and legal issues, raised by the opposition, held up consideration of demands for certain Budget grants. The demands were in respect of those items of the Budget estimates for 1943-44 which were not voted upon in March last owing to the resignation of the late Ministry.

General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief, addressing his first Press Conference (in New Delhi), since he took over charge, commented on the great improvement he had noticed in the co-operation between the three Services in India and between the U. S. forces and Indian forces.

- 7th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, budget demands for the current financial year not disposed of during the last session were ruled out of order by the Speaker.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, a statement on the food situation by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Minister of Civil Supplies, was made on the opening day of the Monsoon Session.

- 8th. The Government of India's decisions on measure to meet the food situation were announced to the Conference by Sir Azizul Haque, the Food Member. The decisions, *inter alia* were:—Rationing in urban areas to be taken up in a progressively increasing measure and almost immediately. A merciless attack on the hoarder and the profiteer to be launched immediately throughout India by all Provinces and States. Free Trade not to be considered except as an objective for the return of normal conditions.

- 9th. The Bengal Legislative Assembly was occupied with the discussion of an Opposition resolution on the release of political prisoners.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, a resolution recommending the release of political prisoners was moved by Mr. Bankim Chandra Datta (Congress).

- 10th. F. M. Lord Wavell addressing Indian Bevin trainees in London said: "I have spent some of the best and most pleasant years of my life in India. I have great love for the country and I hope in the new post, with which I have been honoured, to do something to repay the debt, I owe to India. I shall do my best."

- 11th. Under the auspices of the Hindu Muslim Unity Association, speeches emphasising the need for communal unity were made at a meeting at the Town Hall, Calcutta. The Nawab of Murshidabad presided.

Under the auspices of the All India Women's Conference, Calcutta Branch, at a public meeting of the women of Calcutta, a resolution was unanimously adopted strongly supporting the principles of the Rau Committee's Bill relating to Hindu intestate succession.

- 12th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the Government of Bengal's handling of the food situation was severely criticized. Nine special motions were moved by members of the different opposition parties. Some, while condemning the Government's plans, put forward suggestions to tackle the problem.

In the Sind Legislative Assembly, Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah's Ministry sustained its first defeat when a counter-motion from Mir Bunde Ali, Khan Talpur (ex-Premier and a supporter of the present Ministry) that the consideration of the proposed revised Land Revenue Assessment be adjourned till the next session was carried by 24 to 12 votes.

- 13th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, about 25 members took part in the debate on the food problem in the Province.

14th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said that the prevailing difficult food situation in India was due to the widespread tendency of cultivators to withhold foodgrains from the market, to larger consumption per head as a result of increased family income, to hoarding by consumers and others, and in many parts of India to the fact that methods whereby surplus supplies of foodgrains had in normal times moved from areas of production to areas of consumption had ceased to function or been seriously weakened.

The Bengal Legislative Assembly, after a three day debate defeated, by 134 votes to 88, a special motion by Rai H. N. Chowdhury, of the non-official Congress Party, which aimed at censuring the Ministry, and their handling of the food situation.—A similar motion by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal (official Congress) was defeated by 133 votes to 82. The Assembly was prorogued.

15th. Sir Sultan Ahmed, Information Member, Government of India, addressing the members of the Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, in Bombay, stated that he wished to see the country maintain a free Press even in wartime. He added that while he would be a watchful advocate of its privileges, he expected the Editors to be equally watchful in discharging their duties.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the food debate on a special motion proposed by Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutt was continued.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, told a London meeting of the Institute of Export that the British traders "have got to face the fact that most of the world is going to be able to make for itself old staple goods on which we relied in the past and that we must concentrate more and more on newer types of production and on our special experience in production and the installation of capital plant, on salesmanship, on reliability and promptitude of delivery, in fact on Co-operative Service to the needs of individual countries with which we have to deal. This applies in a special degree to India."

16th. In the Bengal Legislative Council, a resolution urging the immediate release of Mahatma Gandhi and members of the Congress Working Committee "to resolve the Indian deadlock" was passed.

17th. The Standing Finance Committee for Railways met in New Delhi to consider the question of the lower gazetted service. No decision was reached and the consideration of the question was postponed.

In a discussion with representatives of Indian public bodies at Durban, Mr. G. Heaton Nicholls visualized an Indian township with all amenities and also an Indian Mayor and Councillors who would be elected by the residents. In the township Indians could develop along their own lines.

At a meeting of the Sind Muslim League Assembly Party at Karachi, a resolution was passed recording its sense of complete solidarity and loyalty to the Muslim League both within and without the Legislature,

18th. The view that Mahatma Gandhi, in committee, could alone modify the policy of the Congress was expressed at an informal meeting (in Bombay) of some Congressmen and women released from jail.—Undiminished confidence in Mahatma Gandhi's leadership was also expressed and all moves by other parties to rescind the August Resolution while Congress Leaders were in prison were deprecated as ill-conceived.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, replying to the address of welcome, presented to him by the Anjuman Islamia, Quetta, said: "Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to hear your grievances, difficulties and demands again and again. It shows that now there is a wide awakening amongst you, and that you feel and realise the position in which you are placed. You have begun to understand what you lack and what you need."

19th. The Bengal Legislative Council rejected without a division a special motion by Mr. Kamini Kumar Dutt (Official Congress Party) which charged the government with having failed to tackle the province's food problem.

Sir P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan President, made a vigorous plea for systematic industrialisation, self-sufficiency in the matter of food and educating the people on right lines, while addressing the joint session of the Travancore Assembly.

The Indo-European Council met at Durban to discuss the possibility of

forming a public utility housing company to promote Indian housing at Durban. No decision was reached.

- 20th. The position of the handloom under the Cotton and Yarn Control Order was explained by the Textile Commissioner to the Government of India in a communique received in Calcutta.

His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir appointed a Commission of Inquiry under the presidency of Chief Justice Ganganath. The Commission would consist of eight Muslims, eight Hindus, one Sikh and one Buddhist, the members were selected principally from the Praja Sabha.

- 21st. The Madras Rationing Order, 1943, embodying regulations for the rationing of articles, issued by the Government under the Defence of India Rules, was published in the Fort St. George Gazette. The order extended to the whole of the Province.

Pandit Godavaris Misra, Finance Minister of Orissa, addressing a public meeting at Angul organized by the National War Front, observed: "Independence must be won and that too within the shortest possible time, but it must be won and not obtained by logical argument, however intelligently put. In the present world struggle, India must herself be a valiant unit by making sacrifices of her men. Then alone can she obtain and retain independence."

- 22nd. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Dr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir Jagadish Prasad arrived in New Delhi to attend the meeting of the Standing Committee of the All-Parties Leaders' Conference.

Mr. L. S. Amery stated in the House of Commons that he was communicating with the Indian Government regarding a suggestion by Mr. Sorenson (labour) that arrangements should be made for representative Indian editors or journalists to visit Britain. He added that he would consider the matter as soon as he had received the Indian Government's views.

- 23rd. The Standing Committee of the Non-Party Leaders' Conference met in Delhi and had preliminary discussions.

In the Travancore Sir Mulam Assembly, the Dewan-President referred to the important question of inflation and deflation and the steps taken by both the Central and Travancore Governments to deal with them.

- 24th. The Standing Committee of the Non-Party Leaders' Conference issued a statement appealing to the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi to close the "dismal chapter of strife and ill-feeling" in the country.

The statement expressed the opinion: "Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Jawharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders should be released and given an opportunity of reconsidering their Resolution of August, 1942, and of making out the effort to bring a settlement between the conflicting elements in Indian national life. Alternatively, they should be put on their trial before an impartial Tribunal and given every reasonable facility to meet such charges as may be brought against them."

In response to an order from the Government of India, Allama Mashriqi, Khaksar leader, instructed his followers all over the country to remove their red armlets.

- 25th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in reply to a communication from Sir Mohammad Nawaz Khan, member of the Punjab Assembly, declared: "There is not the slightest doubt that immediately after the Sikander-Jinnah Pact the Unionist Party in the Punjab was no more."

The Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha adopted a resolution protesting against the statement made in the House of Commons by Mr. Amery on the Indian food situation, and characterising it as misleading and adding insult to injury. The meeting was under the presidency of Dr. Shyama Prosad Mukherjee in Calcutta.

- 26th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League was attacked with a knife by a visitor who came to interview him in Bombay. The visitor, who was a Muslim, was arrested by the police.

The Central Legislative Assembly began its monsoon session with Sir Abdur Rahim, President, in the Chair. Sir Mohammad Azizul Huque, Sir Asoka Roy and Dr. N. B. Khare, the three new Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were sworn in.

Replying to a question by Mr. A. B. Chattopadhyaya, Mr. N. V. H. Symons,

Civil Defence Secretary, said that between April 2 and June 26, 1943, there were seven enemy air raids on British India and on Indian States. All the raid on British India were directed against military targets in S. E. Bengal.

In the Central Assembly, the War Secretary, Mr. C. M. Trivedi, replying to Mr. Lalchand Navalrai announced that Government would be glad to arrange for the discussion of the war situation at a secret meeting, when a full statement would be made by the Commander in Chief, if the President issued directions similar to those issued in connexion with previous secret sessions.

- 27th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sardar Mangal Singh, Congress member for the Punjab, spoke on Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari's resolutions asking for a revision of Government policy with regard to treatment of political prisoners and detenus. He described the treatment of prisoners of the 1942 Civil disobedience movement, which he alleged was worse than that of prisoners of war in India and that of detenus in India before 1942. He supported the resolution.

The Central Assembly rejected by 41 votes to 38, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari's resolution, with Mr. Deshmukh's amendment.

Raja Sir Maharaja Singh, expressed his desire to relinquish the office of the Prime Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir State. H. H. the Maharaja accepted his resignation with effect for July 27th. 1943.

- 28th. A Press Note stated: "In the publicity recently given to a Circular addressed by the Bengal Government to all registered Trade Unions and Chambers of Commerce on the responsibility of labour leaders in the matter of strikes, much emphasis has been laid on the proposed Government action against leaders advising labour to go on strike without giving the necessary 14 day's notice."

- 29th. Mr. L. S. Amery told in the House of Commons that the Government of India were investigating the proposal that Indian editors, or responsible journalists representing all Parties, should visit Britain.

Mr. Amery gave a negative reply in the House of Commons to a question by Mr. R. Sorenson (Lab) asking whether Mahatma Gandhi had asked permission or made any attempt to write to the Viceroy or the Secretary of State for India.

Mr. Amery added: "Letters have, however, passed from time to time between Mr. Gandhi and the Home Department of the Government of India but I am not prepared to disclose their number or contents."

The Central Legislative Assembly passed the first reading of Dr. Khare's Bill to amend the Reciprocity Act 1943, so as to make it more effective in its application.

- 30th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, a resolution, condemning the cowardly act on Mr. Jinnah and congratulating him on his providential escape, was passed.

The Central Assembly discussed the situation arising out of the Pegging Law passed by the South African Parliament. A motion was carried asking the Government of India to put into force the provisions of the Reciprocity Act and take such other measures as were considered necessary.

- 31st. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, Supply Member, Government of India, in an interview on his arrival at Karachi, observed: "The British people are anxious that the Indian constitutional problem should be solved and several M. P.'s have said that nothing would please them more than to hear that an agreed solution by the Indian parties is reported to Parliament."

His Excellency the Governor of Bengal promulgated an Ordinance, called the Bengal Vagrancy Ordinance, to give necessary sanction to the Beggars' Scheme inaugurated by the Government of Bengal.

A manifesto issued by the Muslim Majlis (Calcutta) stated *inter alia*: "It is to foster the cause of unity of India that the Muslim Majlis has come into being on mature deliberation of the Mussalmans who have in their heart of hearts the interest of the Muslim community."

Master Tara Singh, President of the Sri Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Punjab, issued a statement from Lahore, in which he said: "The Azad Punjab Scheme was conceived to protect the Sikhs from the communal domination of the Muslims. The Hindus have domination in certain provinces and the

Muslims have in others.....But what about poor Sikhs ; they are in a majority nowhere. They must be protected from the present communal mentality of the various communities."

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, in the course of a statement to the Press in Bombay, announced his resignation of the presidentship of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

August 1943

His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in his farewell address to the Central Legislature, said : "From the very beginning of the war I have done everything a man could do to bring the Indian political parties to their leaders together...It will always be a sharp disappointment to me that these four years of war should, for all that effort, have seen us no nearer our goal."

Homage to the memory of Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore was paid at a meeting in the Calcutta University Senate Hall, on the occasion of his 2nd. death anniversary.

The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha adopted a resolution requesting Mr. V. D. Savarkar to continue to be the President of the Hindu Mahasabha.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport Member explained the transport of the food problem.

The Punjab Government offered additional surplus rice amounting to 22,500 tons for distribution to deficit areas and the Defence Services.

The Bengal Food Grains (Movement Control) Order, 1943, prohibited the export of wheat, rice, paddy grain from the Province except under a permit.

H. H. the Maharaja of Kashmir was unanimously elected Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill without a division, the Muslim League dissenting.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, met the Bengal Ministers and the leaders of different parties to discuss the food problem of the Province.

Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, the Indian High Commissioner, presiding over the Natal Indian Congress said : "The Natal Indian Congress founded by Mr. Gandhi in 1894...has been recognized by the Government of India."

Appeals for funds to relieve the suffering of the people of Bengal, due to food shortage were made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. P. R. Das.

1st. Mr. W. C. Wordsworth presided over a meeting in Calcutta, on the occasion of the "All Bengal Teachers' Day." A resolution was passed making an appeal to the Government of Bengal to help non-government schools and recognize teachers as an essential service by granting them dearness allowances and supplying them with foodstuffs and standard cloth on the same scale as government employees.

2nd. His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in his farewell address to the Central Legislative Assembly in New Delhi, declared : "From the very beginning of the war I have done everything a man could do to bring the Indian political parties and their leaders together, to remove doubts as to the intention of His Majesty's Government regarding India's future, to achieve that sufficiency of common agreement between the parties and the communities of this country and that necessary preliminary acceptance of the legitimate claims of all that must be the pre-condition of any constitutional advance that is worth having, or that can hope for permanence."

The Council of State decided on the suggestion of the President, Sir Maneckji Dadabhai, to send congratulations to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, a former member of the Council of State, on his appointment as Viceroy of India.

In the Council of State, the Home Secretary Mr. Conran Smith, replying to Mr. P. N. Saprú said that the Government were not prepared to disclose the nature or contents of communications received from Mr. Gandhi so long as he remained subject to the restrictions of which the public were aware.

- 3rd. In the Central Legislative Assembly, on the third reading of Dr. N. B. Khare's Reciprocity Act Amendment Bill, Sir Yamin Khan and Sardar Sant Singh suggested that South African officers should not be placed in positions in which they would have Indian troops serving under them, and wherever they were already in such positions they should be transferred.

The Council of State rejected by 24 votes to 10, Pundit H. N. Kunzru's resolution urging that Indian Commissioned Officers serving abroad be paid at the same rate as British Officers in the Indian Army and that the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers and Indian soldiers serving abroad be paid at the same rate as persons occupying corresponding positions in the British Army serving alongside the Indian Army.

- 4th. The Central Legislative Assembly continued the debate on Mr. M. A. Ghani's motion for circulation of the Delhi University (Amendment) Bill.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai insisted that there should be statutory safeguards that arbitrary powers regarding withdrawal of recognition of Colleges would not be exercised.

- 5th. The Central Legislative Assembly, continuing the debate on the 2nd. reading of the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill, rejected by 40 votes to 26 an amendment to reduce the term of office of the Vice-chancellor from 4 to 3 years.

The Council of State unanimously adopted Mr. P. N. Saprú's resolution recommending to the Government of India to represent to His Majesty's Government that an Agent of the Indian Government be appointed in British Guiana and Trinidad to watch over Indian interests.

In the House of Commons, rationing and price control in India was discussed. Mr. Amery told a questioner, that general rationing of commodities, other than food, was not contemplated.

Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to Mr. Sorenson (Lab) in the House of Commons, said that the number of persons under imprisonment in India on May 1, for offences in connexion with the Congress movement was 23,286. The number of persons under detention, whether for a short or indefinite period, was 12,704.

- 6th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. K. C. Neogy's motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss "the failure of the Government of India to make urgent inquiries on the deaths taking place in Bengal owing to starvation", was ruled out of order.

The Council of State discussed Mr. Hossain Imam's resolution urging the import of meat from the United States of America and Australia for the needs of the Defence Services.

Mr. L. S. Amery told Mr. R. W. Sorenson (Lab) in the House of Commons that he had considered the statement by 25 British missionaries in India, which appealed for an amnesty to political prisoners in India.

- 7th. The two-day food drive in Calcutta, Howrah and Bally was started when house to house and shop to shop visits were paid by officers specially deputed for the purpose to ascertain available foodgrains stocks.

Homage to the memory of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore was paid at a meeting held on the occasion of the 2nd anniversary of his death at the Senate Hall of the Calcutta University.

Nearly a hundred men and women were signatories to an appeal for fresh efforts to secure a settlement in India. Copies of the appeal were sent to the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow and the Viceroy-designate Lord Wavell.

The Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, which met in Bombay, adopted a resolution requesting Mr. V. D. Savarkar to continue to be the President until the question of his resignation was finally considered at the next meeting of the Working Committee.

8th. The policy of the Hindu Mahasabha in regard to the formation of coalition Ministries was laid down in a resolution which the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha adopted.

The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha adopted a resolution on the food situation, which stated *inter alia*: "The Working Committee notes with concern and alarm the steady deterioration in the food situation throughout the country. It records its opinion that this is due mainly to the thoughtless emphasis laid by Government on military requirements in India and abroad and its failure in properly coordinating its plans and activities so as to protect the legitimate interests of the Indian people at large."

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said in the course of a statement in Hyderabad: "Following the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and of the members of the Working Committee, there seems to have arisen some confusion of ideas and some conflict of opinion among the Congress workers who were suddenly left without a definite mandate or any recognized leadership. I wish to clear any lingering doubts by stating that no authority was delegated either by the Working Committee or by the All-India Congress Committee to any individual or groups within the Congress to issue manifestoes or evolve new policies in the name of the Congress"

9th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, initiating the food debate, Sir Mohammad Azizul Haque, Food Member, described the difficulties and obstructions the government had to face. He said: "Unabated action has brought no safety through great difficulties in the first six months of the year. We have many difficulties today and we shall probably have more difficulties in the future. I can assure the House that the Department for which I speak will spare no effort to solve these difficulties."

Bombay Congressmen observed the first anniversary of the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders. The Bombay Municipal School Committee had declared a holiday and therefore all municipal schools remained closed. A large number of high schools and college too were closed.

The Labourite Member of Parliament Mr. Reginald Sorenson, at a meeting organised by the India League (in London) on the anniversary of the imprisonment of Congress leaders, declared. "We should be seeking every means to reopen negotiation with the Indian leaders and change the atmosphere in India."

10th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport Member, explained the transport aspect of the food problem, when the Assembly resumed the debate on the food situation.

Mr. Louis Fischer, the writer, speaking at a rally of the India League of America (in New York) on the anniversary of the arrest of Congress leaders, said that F. M. Wavell's arrival in India in October could be made the occasion of an easy settlement of the Indian problem. Nationalists wanted nothing more than an Indian nationalist government with limited function which would collaborate with the United Nations and help win the war. "Neither Mr. Gandhi nor any other Indian leader is asking the British to quit during the war."

11th. Gen. Smuts declined to receive a deputation from the South African Indian Congress, which desired to submit to him the resolutions adopted at their meeting.

In response to a request from the Bengal Government the Sind Government deputed Mr. K. K. Framji, Executive Engineer, Sind P. W. D. to proceed to Calcutta to advise the Bengal Government regarding the closing of breaches in the Damodar River.

12th. The Council of State discussed the food situation.

In the Council of State, the Commander in-chief, replying to a question, said that the cost of maintaining prisoners of war in India amounted to Rs. 1,512 lakhs in the last three years. The entire expenditure was being borne by His Majesty's Government.

13th. In the Council of State, Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, made an appeal to the public and Provincial Governments for co-operation in solving the food problem.

The Central Legislative Assembly passed the War Injuries (Compensation

Insurance) Bill introduced by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member of the Government of India.

- 14th. The representation made by the Calcutta University for a grant of Rs. 1,75,000 for paying dearness allowances to University employees was turned down by the Bengal Government.

In the Council of State Sir David Devadoss, who presided in the absence of Sir Maneckji Dadabhoj (President) said that he could not admit Mr. V. V. Kallikar's adjournment motion to discuss "the failure of the government to stop export of a large consignment of rice from Calcutta to South Africa."

Sir Mirza Ismail, in the course of his Convocation Address to the University of Nagpur, gave advice to young men to do all in their power to create a more friendly atmosphere in the country.

- 15th. With a view to implementing the decision of the third All-India Food Conference, the Central Government decided to restore to the Governments of Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from August 16, 1943 the powers conferred by D. I. Rule 81 on the Regional Food Commissioner, Eastern Region, to prohibit or restrict the movement, transport, distribution, disposal or acquisition of any foodgrains or their products.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, replying to a question at a Press Conference at Nagpur, said: "For the last 30 years we have been accustomed to the ideology of Geographical Unity of India and the Congress has been the strongest advocate of that unity but suddenly the Muslim minority, which has been asking one concession after another, has, after the Communal Award, come forward with the claim that it is a separate nation. I have no quarrel with Mr. Jinnah's two nation theory. We, Hindus, are a nation by ourselves and it is a historical fact that Hindus and Muslims are two nations."

Mr. Savarkar added that the Hindu Mahasabha was always willing to extend its hand of co-operation to all who accept the four principles, namely, territorial integrity of India, majority rule in provinces and the Centre, residuary powers in the Centre and recruitment to public services on merit alone.

- 16th. Additional Surplus rice amounting to 22,500 tons was offered by the Punjab Government for distribution to deficit areas and the Defence Services. Bengal, Bombay, Madras, Travancore and Cochin, among other areas, were to benefit by the assistance.

- 17th. The Central Legislative Assembly continued discussion on the Delhi University Bill.

Dr. N. B. Khare said that the Indian Reciprocity Act would automatically come into force on September 1, 1943.

Sir John Colville, Governor of Bombay, in his convocation address to the graduates of the Bombay University, emphasised that India was certain to be in the full stream and current of what was happening beyond its frontiers. He said that it was right that young men and women should ponder on what the future of India demanded.

Sir Edward Benthall, Member for the War Transport, Government of India, had discussions with the Governor, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy and representatives of war transport and railway administrations about the transport of food, coal and other important commodities into Bengal.

- 18th. His Excellency the Viceroy and Her Excellency Marchioness of Linlithgow arrived in Madras on a farewell visit to the city.

Mr. Sardar Bahadur Khan (Muslim League) was elected Speaker of the Frontier Assembly when the Budget Session opened.

The Frontier Assembly passed all the six Official Bills including the N. W. F. P. War Services (Exemption from Qualification) Bill, the Ministers' Salaries (Second Amendment) Bill and the Speaker's and the Deputy Speaker's Salaries (Amendment) Bill.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Muslim and minority representation in the University Services was discussed during the second reading of the Delhi University Bill.

- 19th. The Central Legislative Assembly continued discussion on the second reading of the Delhi University Bill and disposed of 13 amendments before it rose for the day. Two of these amendments were accepted by the government.

- 20th. The Government of Bengal decided to control from August 28, the prices

of rice and paddy throughout the Province, and to buy stocks in selected areas where a surplus was available with the harvesting of "aus" crop. All exports of rice and paddy from the Province were prohibited.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, thirteen more amendments to the Schedules of the Delhi University Bill were disposed of.

A statement from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, bitterly criticizing the India Government and Mr. Amery for refusal to disclose Gandhiji's correspondence with the Home Department, was published in the *Manchester Guardian*. Sir Tej Bahadur asked: "How can Mr. Amery be responsible to the House of Commons and treat Parliament with such scant courtesy. Is the Commons going to abdicate its ultimate constitutional responsibility."

- 21st. The Central Legislative Assembly disposed of 10 more amendments to the Schedules of the Delhi University Bill. Two of the amendments were withdrawn and the remaining eight were rejected.

The Calcutta branch of the All-India Women's Conference in an appeal, said: "Anxiety is increasing regarding the fate of people particularly women and children who are to-day homeless and destitute due to famine conditions in Bengal."

The Bengal Foodgrains (Movement Control) Order, 1943, prohibited the export of wheat, rice, paddy, jowar, bajra, gram, barley, maize, rahar and masur from the Province except under a permit.

H. H. the Maharaja of Kashmir was unanimously elected Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University at a special meeting of the University Court in Benares.

- 22nd. A Press Note from New Delhi, said: "Since statements are still appearing in the Press that heavy exports of foodgrains from India, and from Bengal in particular, are continuing, the Government of India wish to state categorically that there is no foundation whatever for such statements."

References to the measures adopted by the Bengal Ministry to solve the food problem was made by Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, the Premier, replying to an address of welcome by the Uttarpara Municipality.

- 23rd. The Bengal Ministry of Civil Supplies in a Press Note, said: "The Government of India has by a Gazette notification dated Aug. 16, repealed all orders of the Regional Commissioners, E. Region, under the D. I. Rules provided this does not affect any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred for any contravention of order made by the Regional Commissioner or any investigation or legal proceeding in respect of such contravention."

H. E. the Viceroy accompanied by His Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgow and the Countess of Hopetown and party, arrived in Kottayam from Cochin.

- 24th. The Central Legislative Assembly passed the second reading of the Delhi University Bill, when the remaining 19 amendments were discussed, three being accepted and the others rejected.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, who returned to Calcutta after a tour of the Burdwan and Nadia districts affected by floods and food shortage, in a statement said that the Government relief operations were "utterly meagre and in some respects unplanned and unsatisfactory." He stressed the need for a coordinated scheme of relief.

The death occurred at his residence in Madras of Diwan Bahadur M. C. Raja, at the age of 60. He was a wellknown leader of the Depressed Classes.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, the Chauri ruled out of order an adjournment motion tabled by Maulavi Abdul Ghani, after the War Transport Minister, Sir Edward Benthall, had explained that the Government of India had no Trade Agent to make purchases of foodgrains and that no purchases of foodgrains were made in Bihar on behalf of the Government of India.

- 25th. The Central Legislative Assembly passed the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill without a division, the Muslim League dissenting.

The Council of State held a brief sitting, when the Secretary laid on the table the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill as passed by the Assembly.

His Excellency Sir Arthur Hope inaugurated the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Government Muhammadan College at the premises of the College (in Madras) and declared open the Islamic History and Culture Exhibition organised in that connexion.

- 26th. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, met Sir K. Nazimuddin, Premier and other member of the Bengal Cabinet (in Calcutta) and discussed the food problem of the Province.
The circumstances under which Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung was extorted from the Kashmir State were explained in a communique issued by His Highness' Government.
- 27th. In the Council of State, the Chair ruled out of order Mr. Hossain Imam's adjournment motion to discuss the failure of the Government of India to obtain gold from H. M. G. and to discuss the sale of gold on behalf of H. M. G. by the Reserve Bank.
- 28th. The Central Government's accounts for June, 1943 showed that excluding periodical adjournments and the transactions of railways and posts and telegraphs expenditure in the first three months of the financial year 1943-44 exceed revenue by Rs. 33- $\frac{1}{2}$ crores against Rs. 29- $\frac{1}{2}$ crores in the corresponding period of the previous year.
Eleven relief camps with accommodation for a total of 9,000 people, have been set up in the districts 24-Parganas, Hooghly, Howrah and Midnapore to accommodate destitute people who were repatriated to their home districts from Calcutta in accordance with the decision taken at a conference of Ministers, Secretaries and heads of departments.
Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, met the Bengal Ministers and the leaders of different parties in the legislature in the Assembly House, Calcutta. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Civil Supplies Minister, explained the steps Government were taking to relieve distress in the Province. He appealed to the Food Member to arrange every possible help for Bengal from outside.
- 29th. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru made an appeal to the people of the U. P. to come to the rescue of their countrymen in Bengal in a letter addressed to the Editor of the "Leader" Allahabad.
The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Premier of Orissa at a Press Conference in Cuttack, said: "The Government were rushing supplies to Balasore and Ganjam districts at the rate of one wagon of rice or paddy a day from Koraput to relieve these two districts."
The Executive Committee of the Medical Council of India at its meeting in New Delhi under the presidentship of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy considered the question of further facilities to practitioners, registered with provincial medical Councils for obtaining qualifications recognized by the M. C. I.
- 30th. Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, the Indian High Commissioner, presiding at the inaugural meeting of the Natal Indian Congress, in Durban, announced: "The Natal Indian Congress founded by Mr. Gandhi in 1894 and resuscitated today, has been recognized by the Government of India which will discourage any attempt to create a rural organization."
In the Council of State, 38 out of 44 amendments to the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill tabled by the opposition, were disposed of. The main discussion centred on the question of communal representation on the University bodies and services.
- 31st. Appeals for funds to relieve the suffering of the people of Bengal, due to food shortage, were made by Mr. M. A. Jinnah from Bombay, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya from Benares and Mr. P. R. Das, Rai Bahadur S. Sahay and Dr. S. Sinha from Patna.
The difference of opinion that had existed between the Governments of Bengal and Orissa regarding the supply of foodstuffs from Orissa was removed and an understanding reached when Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Minister for Civil Supplies, Bengal, met the Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Premier of Orissa at the Calcutta Secretariat.

September 1943

H. M. the King was graciously pleased to approve the appointment of Sir Thomas Rutherford, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Governor of Bihar to act as Governor of Bengal, in view of the serious illness of H. E. Sir John Herbert, G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal.

The Orissa Government agreed to supply 4 lakh maunds of paddy to Bengal, to help the distressed in the Province.

Nawab Yar Jung Bahadur, President, A. I. States' Muslim League, at a Press Conference in Lahore contradicted the facts set forth in the Kashmir Government Press Notes, on his exenment from Kashmir.

Lord Wavell, speaking at a reception in London, said : "I know from personal experience how very great the contribution of India to the war effort has been. We should not have held the Middle East but for India."

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee sent an open letter to Sir Thomas Rutherford, Governor of Bengal, which said *inter alia* : "Government must accept full responsibility for producing foodgrains and other essential commodities. Arrangements must be made to obtain a steady supply from other parts of India."

For the relief of distress in Bengal, the Government of India asked all provincial and State Governments in areas where exportable surpluses existed to consign supplies offered by private persons or charitable organizations, to the Bengal Government.

H. E. the Governor of Bengal received a cheque for one lakh of Rupees as a contribution from the United Provinces War Committee towards the relief of distress in Bengal. Further donations from the Central Provinces, His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal and the H. H. the Maharaja of Jind were also received.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the food policy of the Bengal Government was strongly criticized during a debate on the province's food situation.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the food situation occupied a prominent place in the general discussion of the Budget.

The Mysore Government ordered the constitution of a Central Food Council at Bangalore, to secure the effective advice and co-operation of non-officials.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, in an official statement as to the nature and causes of the failure of food supplies in certain parts of India, said *inter alia* : "Among those causes have been poor rice crops in Bengal, the loss of Burma imports, the withholding of some portion of their crops from sale.....and doubtlessly hoarding by merchants."

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, said in Bombay : The Government of India are making strenuous efforts to bring to this country as early as possible considerable quantities of foodgrains from foreign countries and they have every intention of implementing, as far as it is in their power, the recommendations of the Long-Term Planning Committee, to set up Central foodgrains reserve."

Mr. J. W. Scully, Minister of Commerce and Agriculture (Australia) stated that Australia could supply all the wheat needed for starving India, provided the U. K. could provide ships. Wheat was practically waiting for loading on boats...Australia was ready and waiting.

1st. Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Supply Member, Government of India, speaking at a dinner party in Madras, said he was convinced that at the end of the war India would be made a self-governing country. Referring to the food

situation he suggested, that import of foodstuffs should come from the U. S. A. and Australia.

The Reciprocity Act, as amended, came into force on the 1st. September 1943, but being an enabling measure, it would be of practical effect only when a notification was issued, bringing it into operation against any particular country.

- 2nd. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, vice-president, Bengal Relief Committee, in a statement said that he received a telegram from Mr. S. K. Mookerjee, director, Scindia Steam Navigation Co., Bombay, informing him that the company was prepared to provide a special steamer for carrying foodgrains to Bengal from Karachi without charging freight.

- 3rd. A communique from New Delhi said: "In view of the serious illness of H. E. Sir John Herbert, G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal, H. M. the King has been graciously pleased to approve the appointment of H. E. Sir Thomas Rutherford, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Governor of Bihar, to act as Governor of Bengal.

H. M. has also been graciously pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. R. F. Mudie C.S.I., C.I.E., O.B.E., at present Chief Secretary to the Government of U. P. to act as Governor of Bihar during Sir Thomas Rutherford's absence in Bengal.

A review of the events of the past four years was given by Sir Sultan Ahmed, Information Member, in a war anniversary broadcast.

- 4th. The Bengal Premier, Sir Nazimuddin issued an appeal to his countrymen all over India, for contributions to the Central Relief Fund, inaugurated by the Civil Supplies Minister of Bengal.

- 5th. In order to help the distressed in Bengal, and particularly the destitute in Calcutta as a result of food shortage, the Orissa Government agreed to supply four lakh maunds of paddy to the province while the Punjab Government decided to hold a conference in Lahore on September 8 to consider steps for securing and forwarding food grain stocks.—His Excellency the Viceroy and Lady Linlithgow jointly donated Rs. 5,000 towards the cause, while Her Excellency in a special broadcast from New Delhi appealed for aid on behalf of the Province.

In the course of a joint memorandum to Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Sir N. N. Sircar and Sir Jagadish Prasad, ex-Members, Viceroy's Executive Council, stated *inter alia*: "We are presenting this memorandum to the food Member in the hope that it may be of some use to him in dealing with a great calamity....." "Government should immediately provide shelters where medical aid and food can be given to people found on the streets or wandering about in search of food, as also children who have lost their parents. Timely assistance will save many lives.

Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister, Punjab, in a Press Statement, appealed to the Punjab growers to spare maximum quantities of food grains for those in need in other parts of India.

- 6th. The facts set forth in the Kashmir Government Press Note on his externment from Kashmir were contradicted by Nawab Yar Jung Bahadur, President A. I. States' Muslim League, at a Press Conference in Hyderabad.

A "Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary" stated: "Every holder of a license under the food grains control order shall, on or before September 15, register with the officer issuing the license the addresses of all godowns used or proposed to be used for the storage of food grains in respect of which the license has been issued, and shall whenever any change in such address takes place, intimate the officer issuing the license about it within seven days.

Mr. H. S. Subrawardy, Civil Supplies Minister, Bengal, in an interview in New Delhi, said: "Our discussions with the Premiers of the Punjab and Orissa have been hopeful, the more so as I feel that the rest of India has at least awakened to the realization that conditions in Bengal need the utmost help possible."

His Excellency Sir Thomas Rutherford, assumed the office of Governor of Bengal.

- 7th. Lord Wavell speaking at a reception by the Welcome Committee of the Overseas League (London) said: I know from personal experience how very great the contribution of India to the war effort has been. We should not have held the Middle East but for India."

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee sent an open letter to Sir Thomas Rutherford, Governor of Bengal which said, *inter alia* : "Government must accept full responsibility for providing foodgrains and other essential commodities. Arrangement must be made to obtain a steady supply from other parts of India and the quota allotted to Bengal by the Government of India, recently reduced, must be increased. The manner in which rice was sought to be purchased by the Bengal Government from the neighbouring provinces during the period of full trade was highly defective."

At the plenary session of the Labour Conference in New Delhi, a resolution to set up machinery to investigate question of wages earnings and collect material on which to plan a policy of social security for labour, was adopted. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Member for Labour, Government of India, presided.

8th. "There is a very acute shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal and the next three months are to be crucial. The only way to tide over the situation is to get whatever grain one can have either by seizing, borrowing or stealing from other parts of India. This is the only method to save the starving millions of Bengal," observed Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member of the Government of India at a Press Conference in Lahore.

9th. To facilitate the movement of foodgrains for the relief of distress in Bengal, the Government of India asked all Provincial and State Governments in areas where exportable surpluses existed to consign supplies, offered by private persons or charitable organizations, to the Bengal Government with instructions if intended for any particular organization.

10th. Sir Jagadish Prosad, ex-Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, in a memorandum on the situation in Bengal, issued in Calcutta and submitted to the Bengal Premier, urged H. E. the Viceroy and members of his Executive Council to visit Bengal and see how acute was the distress in the province.

The Orissa Merchants' Relief Committee, with the Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Orissa Premier, as the President, appealed for funds to relieve food scarcity in the Province.

11th. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, before his departure for Delhi from Lahore, said that he was shortly visiting Simla to meet the Punjab Governor and his Ministers to discuss steps to be taken to bring out stocks of foodgrains from Punjab villages.

A Press Communique from New Delhi, said : "The Government of India have had under consideration for sanction the need for special legislation to cope with the large increase of fraud, bribery and corruption in connexion with government contracts and stores and the provision of railway transport."

12th. H. E. the Governor of Bengal received a cheque for one lakh of rupees as a contribution from the United Provinces War Committee towards the relief of distress in Bengal. Further donation of Rs. 25,000 from the Central Provinces War Committee, Rs. 15,000 from His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal and a twenty ton wagon of rice from Highness the Maharaja of Sind were also received.

H. E. Sir Thomas Rutherford accompanied by Mr. O. E. S. Fairweather, Commissioner of Police, made an informal tour of Relief Centres in Calcutta.

13th. The Bengal Government's decision to levy a tax on agricultural income was criticized at a Landholders' Conference at the British Indian Association Hall, Calcutta, the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga presided.

The Madras Provincial Food Conference concluded its deliberations at Trichinopoly, after passing a number of resolutions, Dr. A. Krishnaswami presided.

14th. The Bengal Government's Budget Estimates for 1943-44, were presented by Mr. T. C. Goswami, Finance Minister, on the opening day of the extraordinary session of the Bengal Assembly. The Budget showed a deficit of 7 crores 36 lakhs.

The Minister said : "This huge deficit is due entirely to the burden laid on our revenues by measures for the relief of distress in our present misfortunes."

15th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Food Minister, in a statement on the food situation in Bengal declared : "I claim that we have

done the best that we could with the resources at our disposal and I believe that although dark and dismal days are still ahead, we are in a position to face the future with more hope and assurance."

- 16th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the Agricultural Income-Tax Bill introduced by Mr. T. O. Goswami was referred to a Select Committee. The purpose of the Bill was to levy a tax on agricultural income from lands.

By 111 votes to 66, the Bengal Legislative Assembly rejected the official Congress Party's adjournment motion to discuss "the failure of the Government of Bengal to set at liberty persons purported to have been detained under Rule 28 of the Defence of India Rules in spite of the decision of the Calcutta High Court and the recent decision of the Federal Court of India declaring the procedure adopted by the Bengal Government regarding detention as contrary to law and improper."

- 17th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the food policy of the Bengal Government was strongly criticized during a debate on the province's food situation. Twelve members took part in the discussion in which reference was made to the mounting death-roll in Calcutta and elsewhere in the province due to starvation and the misery caused by food shortage—Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, leader of the Nationalist Party, led the attack.

A Press Note from New Delhi said: "The Hon. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member to the Government of India, held a Conference in New Delhi with the Premier of the Punjab, Lt. Col. Malik Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, Sir Chhotu Ram and Sardar Baldev Singh. He discussed questions affecting the procurement of foodgrains in the Punjab for despatch to Bengal and other deficit areas."

A Gazette Extraordinary published from Cuttack, the Orissa Foodgrains (Control of Movement and Transaction) Order 1943: "Under this order no person can move foodgrains for transport from Orissa except under a permit issued by the Director of Food Supplies."

- 18th. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the food situation in Bengal figured prominently in the general discussion of the Budget. All Sections agreed that Bengal had a strong case for large and more substantial financial help from the Government of India.

The Textile Commissioner, Bombay, in a Press Note, said *inter alia*: "It is not possible to keep open indefinitely government's offer to purchase unmarked cloth and yarn in full bales from dealers who were not able to dispose of their goods by August 31, 1943.....the Textile Commissioner, in consultation with the Chairman of Textile Control Board, has, therefore, decided that no application offering goods to the government, which is passed or delivered by hand after September 25 will be entertained."

- 19th. Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, M.L.A. (Central) in a statement in Bombay, suggested that Congress members of the Legislature should meet at Delhi on November 7, to consider the food situation in the country and help in organizing relief.

- 20th. A Press Note was issued by the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Bengal, which stated *inter alia*: "It has now been decided that the rationing is to be on an individual basis, and separate ration cards will be issued to each consumer."

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, there was an uproar during the concluding phase of a debate on a Government demand for a grant of Rs. 3, 52,00,000 for famine relief measures—the cut motions were rejected and the entire demand was voted.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the food situation occupied a prominent place in the general discussion of the Budget.

The Mysore Government ordered the constitution of a Central Food Council at Bangalore, to secure the effective advice and co-operation of non-officials.

- 21st. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, Mr. K. S. Roy, leader of the official Congress Party, referred to the complete disappearance of rice from markets.

The Bengal Legislative Council concluded the general Budget discussion. While the opposition directed its attack against Government's food policy, some of the Ministry's supporters urged that drastic action should be taken to stamp out corruption in the administration.

Lord Wavell spoke on his task in India when he addressed the East India Association at a reception in his honour in London.

22nd. Mr. L. S. Amery made the following statement in the House of Commons about famine conditions in India in a written reply:—
“Besides the measures taken for the improvement of the food position in India as a whole, rationing plans are already in operation in Bombay City and some other large towns. They are to be extended to a total of some 70 such towns, including Calcutta, where rationing is expected to be in operation in November. Relief measures are in operation in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal.”

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the opposition staged a walk-out as a protest against the decision of the speaker, not to allow Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, leader of the opposition to make a statement on a speech by Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, Civil Supplies Minister on the food situation.

The Bengal Legislative Council decided to take into consideration the Vagrancy Bill as passed by the Assembly.

23rd. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, made the first official statement on Bengal food situation. He said: “My earlier statement as to the nature and cause of the failure of food supplies in certain parts of India holds good. Among those causes have been poor rice crops in Bengal, the loss of Burma imports, the withholding of some portion of their crops from sale by 50,000,000 peasant producers, and doubtlessly by merchants coupled with some clashes of provincial and national interests and some local failures of administration.”

The Viceroy-designate, Lord Wavell, receiving the freedom of the City of Winchester, said: “We have little of which to be ashamed in our dealings with India and very much of which to be proud.”

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, the working of the Civil Supplies Department and the transactions of Messrs. A. H. Ispahani & Co, as sole food-grains purchasing agent for the Bengal Government, formed the main targets of criticism by the opposition.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, the gravity of Bengal's food situation was stressed by members of various parties. The opposition moved a special motion criticizing the government's food policy and urging that the province should be declared a famine area.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in an interview to foreign Press Correspondents, said: “Pakistan is an indispensable condition of any settlement in India.”

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, demands for grants for the Judicial and Irrigation departments came up for consideration.

In the Bengal Legislative Council, by 28 votes to 12, the Opposition's special motion criticizing the Government's food policy, was rejected.

25th. Mr. Mrinal Kanti Bose, presiding at the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress, in Calcutta said that the forces of capitalism released by war conditions had given a fillip to profit-making by war manufacturers and middlemen of all sorts, but the workers, industrial and agricultural, who should have also benefitted, had little share in the prosperity.

Mr. J. K. Mitter, presiding at the second quarterly General Meeting of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, declared that the food problem could be solved satisfactorily only through the co-operation of the public and the commercial community.

In the Bengal Legislative Assembly, consideration of the Budget came to an end with the passing of demands for grants for Agriculture, Education, Excise and some other departments.

26th. According to an Official report received at Srinagar, seven persons were killed and nine injured as the result of police firing in Jammu on Sept. 24. Twenty-five police officers and men received injuries.

Messrs. B. R. Reddy, V. Satyanarayana, N. Satyanarayan and other members of the Touring Committee, appointed by the Working Committee of the Andhra Mahasabha submitted their report on the famine conditions in Rayalaseema.

27th. The Bengal Legislative Assembly, by 128 votes to 88, rejected a special motion by Dr. Nalinakshaya Sanyal, (un-official Congress) condemning the Nazimuddin Ministry's handling of the food situation.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India when he met the Committee of the Indian Merchants' Chamber in Bombay, said: “The Govern-

ment of India are making strenuous efforts to bring to this country as early as possible considerable quantities of food grains from foreign countries and they have every intention of implementing, as far as it lies in their power, the recommendations of the Long-Term Planning Committee, to set up Central foodgrains reserve.

28th. Mr. W. J. Scully, Minister of Commerce and Agriculture stated from Canberra, that Australia could supply all the wheat needed for starving India provided the U. K. could provide ships. Wheat was practically waiting for loading on boats. There was no indication yet from the U. K. whether ships could be made available. Australia was ready and waiting.

The Bengal Legislative Council was prorogued after passing the Vagrants Bill.

A Press Note said: "An agreement was reached recently with the Orissa Government under which that Government, in view of the serious food difficulties in Bengal, agreed to release large quantities of rice amounting to several thousand tons."

30th. The death occurred in Calcutta of Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Editor, "*Modern Review*" and "*Prabasi*."

Dasara celebrations commenced amidst general rejoicings in Mysore. H. H. Sir Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar Bahadur, Maharaja of Mysore, held a special durbar in the morning at 'Sajjee' in this connection.

October 1943

Mahatma Gandhi's 75th birthday was celebrated in Bombay—khadi was mainly sold.

The Punjab exported 265,100 tons of foodgrains and foodproducts to Bengal from the beginning of May to September 27.

The Dasara Session of the Mysore Representative Assembly commenced in Mysore. The Dewan President was in the Chair.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Premier, Bengal, in a statement denied responsibility for the famine in the Province and demanded a Royal Commission to inquire into its causes.

H. E. Sir Thomas Rutherford, Acting Governor of Bengal, made a call to the people of Bengal to cease all party controversy and offer "whole-hearted co-operation in the urgent task of setting Bengal on her feet again."

The Chinese Community celebrated the 32nd. anniversary of the Republic of China, in Calcutta.

Sir Thomas Rutherford, Acting Governor of Bengal, had a series of Conferences in New-Delhi, with the Viceroy and members of the Viceroy's Council on the food situation in Bengal.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, in a statement in the House of Commons on the Bengal food crisis, said *inter alia*: "We have made every effort to provide shipping and considerable quantities of foodgrains are now arriving or are due to arrive before the end of the year."

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food member of the Government of India, opening the Food Conference in New Delhi, announced his intention of setting up a Central Committee to advise the government on the country's food problem.

The Food Conference discussed the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee relating to the basic plan for 1943-44, procurement operations and rationing.

The Chamber of Princes passed a resolution pledging the determination

tion of the Princes and the Ruling Chiefs of India to continue to help in the achievement of the final Allied Victory.

Mr. Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India, drew up a scheme for a national system of education to provide all children in India with basic education.

Viscount Wavell was sworn in as Viceroy in New Delhi.

In the House of Lords, during the debate on the famine in India, Lord Cato spoke on the plight of the Bengal peasants.

Mr. N. M. Khan, purchasing agent to the Bengal Government, purchased in the Punjab since September 6, forty two thousand tons of wheat products.

The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, in an open letter addressed to the Secretary of State, the Viceroy and Mahatma Gandhi, made an appeal for ending the deadlock in India.

His Excellency the Viceroy accompanied by Lady Wavell and Sir Thomas Rutherford, Governor of Bengal visited some of the areas in Calcutta where the shelterless refugees were lying about.

Mr. L. S. Amery stated in the House of Commons: "It is estimated that between August 15 and October 16, about 8000 persons died in Calcutta, from causes directly or indirectly due to malnutrition. I have no reliable figures for the whole of India."

1st. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in an Id message (from Bombay) to Muslims said: "We have gone through and faced another year of our political struggle with no small credit to our national organization—the All-India Muslim League. Recently remarkable results were achieved by the Muslim League organization in the various by-elections in Bengal and the N. W. F. P. It is obvious that today we stand more solid and united and stronger than ever before."

The Punjab exported by rail 265,100 tons of foodgrains and products to Bengal from the beginning of May to September 27 according to the statistics published by the N. W. Ry.

2nd. Celebrations in connexion with Mahatma Gandhi's seventy-fifth birthday which commenced in Bombay were confined mainly to the selling of Khadi.

3rd. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, in a statement from Calcutta, said: "Letters and Telegrams are daily pouring in from different parts of Bengal stating that neither rice nor atta is available, and the people are suffering from starvation. The price of rice in some places specially in East Bengal varies between 3 to 4 times the controlled price of Rs. 20. The reports of distress amongst all classes of people are of an appalling character. The immediate problem is to supply foodgrains to the rural areas of the Province. If this is not done during the next week or fortnight nothing can save Bengal."

4th. The Dasara Session of the Mysore Representative Assembly commenced in Mysore in the Jagan Mohan Palace with the Dewan President, Prodhana Shiromani N. Madhava Rao, in the chair.

Bombay contributed nearly Rs. 12 lakhs for famine relief in Bengal.

5th. The Hot Spring Conference's (New Delhi) recommendation was criticised as merely academic at a meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Health. What was required at present in India was sufficient food and a higher standard of life, urged a number of speakers including Maj-General Candy, Mr. P. N. Saprú and Col. Chopra. Sir Jogendra Singh presided.

6th. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Premier and Leader of the Opposition in the Bengal Assembly, in a statement denied responsibility for the famine in the Province and demanded a Royal Commission to inquire into its causes.

7th. Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander, S. E. Asia Command, accompanied by a small staff arrived in New Delhi.

Pandit Godavaris Misra, Finance Minister, Orissa, who visited the rural areas in Puri district, in an interview in Cuttack, said: "The people have been reduced to bags of bones for want of food. Cholera, dysentery and fever are claiming many victims. I saw emaciated people falling down speechless when

trying to ask for food. People were seen carrying small loads of wild roots from neighbouring forests for their meals."

The Mysore Representative Assembly discussed and passed four official bills—Bill for Prohibition of Beggary, the Trade Marks Bill, the Motor Vehicles Bill and the Electricity Bill.

- 8th. H. E. Sir Thomas Rutherford, in a broadcast on the food situation from Calcutta, made a call to the people of Bengal to cease all party controversy and offer "whole-hearted co-operation in the urgent task of setting Bengal on her feet again".

According to a notification published from Cuttack, Mr. Biswanath Das, ex-Premier and Leader of the Orissa Assembly Congress Party was disqualified from being chosen as and from being member of the Orissa Legislative Assembly for a period of 6 years from August 28, 1943.

The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Orissa Premier, in a statement quoted the opinion of Mr. C. C. Ingles, Director of the Civil Irrigation and Hydro-Research Station at Kharakhavalasa (near Poonā) to the effect that "it is quite possible to rid Orissa of its floods for ever by making the Mahanadi carry more water into the seas than what she now does and also by rendering parts of Chilka Lake quite dry".

- 9th. Mr. William Dobie, the Trade Union Leader, declared that the people of Britain wanted action to bring about a big change in India. "This famine sweeping India is man made".

- 10th. At a meeting of the Chinese Community in Calcutta, confidence in the ultimate defeat of Japan and the victory of the Allies was expressed, on the occasion of the celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the Republic of China.

Mr. P. R. Das, in his presidential address at the fifth annual session of the Bengali Association at Monghyr observed: "The foreign foe beyond our boundaries lack of food in the country, mutual discord, clash of interest, individual greed and dishonesty have brought misery and destitution to the people of a fair and fertile province. Bengal feels the pangs of a new birth that pervades the whole earth to-day."

- 11th. Sir Thomas Rutherford, Acting Governor of Bengal, arrived in New Delhi. He had a series of conferences with the Viceroy and members of the Viceroy's Council and officials on the food situation in Bengal.

Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar in a Press statement commenting on the Governor of Bengal's broadcast on the food crisis in Bengal welcomed H. E.'s appeal for whole-hearted co-operation with the Government in their attempt to deal with the problem, which he said had assumed such grave proportions that "only by keeping it severely aloof from all party considerations can we hope to be able to get at the real solution".

The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Chief Minister, Orissa stated that the despatch of 400,000 mds. of rice promised by the Orissa Government for Bengal, would start from October 13. The delay was unavoidable due to transport difficulties and the fixing of the price per bag to be delivered in Calcutta.

At the Representative Assembly, Mysore, a unanimous demand for the introduction of rationing was made by almost every speaker, when the food problem came up for discussion. The Dewan-President was in the chair.

The Bengal Government's Home Department in an order dated 8th October under Rule 41 of the D. I. R. notified, "that any matter relating to the economic condition in Bengal, the food supply situation, relief and distress and civil defence services or organizations shall before being published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* newspaper, till further order, be submitted for scrutiny to the special Press Adviser, Calcutta".

- 12th. Mr. L. S. Amery, in the second statement on the Bengal food crisis, said *inter alia*: "Since the recrudescence of shortage in an acute form we have made every effort to provide shipping and considerable quantities of foodgrains are now arriving or are due to arrive before the end of the year. We have also been able to help in the supply of milk food for children. The problem, so far as help from here is concerned is entirely of shipping, and has to be judged in the light of all other urgent news of the United Nations. The Central Government of India has been actively concerned from the first signs of possible dangers in the food situation."

Under the joint auspices of the Journalist Association of India and the Provincial Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, a resolution

condemning the action of the Central Provinces Government in serving an order under the Defence of India rules on the Editor of the *Hitavada*, requiring him to reveal the source of information regarding the report of resignation of Mr. Blair, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, published in that paper was passed at a meeting in Bombay, Mr. B. G. Horniman presided.

- 13th. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member of the Government of India, opening the All-India Food Conference in New Delhi, announced his intention to set up a Central Committee to advise the Government on the country's food problem. The Committee would be representative of all important elements in India and he appealed to the public to co-operate with the Government in feeding the hungry and in securing full and equitable distribution of the country's food resources.

The session of the Food Conference was occupied with a brief statement by various representatives giving the general reactions of their Governments to the report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee. Some of the representatives prefaced their remarks by a brief indication of their domestic food position.

- 14th. H. E. Lord Linlithgow, addressing the Chamber of Princes for the last time, re-affirmed his faith and confidence in the Federal ideal and in the contribution which the realisation of that ideal, with whatever adjustments might prove necessary in regard to particular aspects of it, would make to Indian unity and to the constitutional future of India.

The Food Conference in New Delhi discussed the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee relating to the basic plan for 1943-44, procurement operations and rationing.

The Secretary of State for India, Mr. L. S. Amery, made a number of written replies in the House of Common to questions about India, chiefly on the food situation.

Madras City experienced one of its worst floods, causing great havoc and damage to property.

- 15th. The Food Conference discussed the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee relating to price control, and expressed itself in favour of such control.

Mr. L. S. Amery, speaking at Birmingham, stated that the Indian situation was being anxiously watched and that every measure necessary would be taken if, by the end of the year, the immediate difficulties had not been overcome.

The determination of the Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India to continue to help in the achievement of the final Allied Victory was pledged in a resolution passed by the Chamber of Princes on the Chancellor's motion.

- 16th. Mr. R. H. Hutchings, Secretary, Food Department, made an important statement on the Government of India's policy at the Food Conference. "Government accepted the conference's recommendation that statutory price control should be instituted for all major foodgrains in all provinces and similar control in increasing the number of non-agricultural commodities particularly those necessary to the cultivator".

- 17th. At the concluding session of the Food Conference, statutory control of major foodgrains in all provinces, urban rationing and procurement to be undertaken by the provinces were the Government of India's three decisions.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, announced that the first ship with foodgrains from 'abroad was already unloading at an Indian port and the second was expected to arrive at any moment.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Premier, Bengal, in a Press statement, regarding Mr. Suhrawardy's utterances at Delhi, said: "When millions are suffering from starvation and misery in Bengal, Mr. Suhrawardy, Bengal's Civil Supplies Minister, with amazing disregard for truth, announced before the Food Conference that the price of rice had gone down in Bengal, and that rice had not disappeared from the markets."

Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, in a statement in Madras, deplored the political deadlock in India and urged the release of political prisoners and the establishment of National Government at the Centre and in the Provinces.

A scheme for a national system of education to provide all children in India with basic education and to enable promising children to pass on to high schools, universities, technical, commercial and art institutions, was outlined in a memorandum prepared by Mr. Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India, as part of the Government of India's Post-War Reconstruction plans, and discussed by the Central Advisory Board of Education.

The Viceroy-designate and Lady Wavell arrived in New Delhi.

18th. His Excellency the Viceroy, in a message sent to the Central Board of Education which met at Dehra Dun, said: "I shall always be sorry that owing to circumstances outside my control I was unable during my Viceroyalty to inaugurate that broad advance towards the establishment of a national system of education which I had in mind before war broke out."

19th. A request to the Council of the A. I. Muslim League to call upon all members of the League organization to dissociate themselves from the Khaksar movement was contained in a resolution adopted by the Working Committee of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League.

Mr. K. M. Munshi said, in an interview at Lahore: "At a time when the war against Japan is the immediate problem of India, British statesmen would be unwise if they do not revise their policy which has produced the gulf of bitterness between India and Britain during the last year."

Senator Clarkson, Minister of the Interior, addressing the Durban City Council, said: "Indians are national citizens of the Union and as such are deserving all rights enjoyed by the European population."

20th. Viscount Wavell was sworn in as Viceroy in New Delhi.

Sardar Baldev Singh, Minister of Development and Food, Punjab, on his return from Delhi after attending the Food Conference, said that the decisions announced by the Government of India met the Punjab's point of view in a large measure. He thought that the grower need have no apprehension that the prices of foodgrains would be controlled to their disadvantage as the Government of India had agreed that if the price were fixed they would take into account the cost of agricultural production.

The House of Lords held a debate on the food situation in India.—The Earl of Huntingdon (Labour) opened the debate by asking Government whether they had any further statement to make regarding the famine conditions in certain provinces in India and what steps would be taken to relieve the situation.

21st. Mr. Churchill announced in the House of Commons that the House would debate the food situation in India in the next series of sittings but one.

A communique issued in New Delhi, said *inter alia*: "Certain sections of the Press have recently condemned the action of the Government in asking the editor of a newspaper to disclose the source of his information about a particular article and in using the powers provided by law for enforcing such a request."

Mr. Amery, replying to a question by Sir John Wardlaw Milne (Congress) about hoarding in Bengal, said that the Foodgrains Control Order, which provided for effective penalties for profiteering and hoarding, was operative throughout India including Bengal.

22nd. During the debate in the House of Lords on the famine in India, Lord Cato spoke on the plight of the Bengal peasants and the danger of disease.

Forty-two thousand tons of wheat products were purchased in the Punjab since Sept. 5, by Mr. N. M. Khan, purchasing agent to the Bengal Government.

A Press communique from New Delhi said: "Ten research students have been selected by a Committee appointed by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Sir Maurice Gwyer, for the award of research scholarships offered by the Government of China as part of a scheme for strengthening cultural contacts between India and China."

23rd. Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, who returned to Calcutta from a town of E. Bengal, said: "There is incredible misery everywhere. Starvation is the lot of the people both in towns and villages, but rural areas are more seriously affected than the urban ones. The suffering of the villagers particularly of women and children bring tears to one's eyes. Smaller cultivators and landless labourers are selling their lands and houses in order to have a few rupees to buy food with. This seems to me to disprove effectively the charge of hoarding, which has often been brought against the cultivator. It is cruel to charge starving villagers with deliberately withholding rice from the markets."

The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri made an appeal for ending the deadlock in India in an open letter addressed to the Secretary of State for India Mr. Amery, His Excellency the Viceroy Lord Wavell and Mahatma Gandhi.

24th. A programme of despatch of food from Calcutta to the deficit districts of Bengal, and of direct booking to such districts from surplus areas was drawn up by the Bengal Government in consultation with transport authorities. This

was expected to relieve food distress in districts, and prevent congestion of food supplies in Calcutta.

- 25th. Mrs. Vijaylakshmi Pandit, President, All-India Women's Conference, giving her impressions of her tour of the flood and famine affected areas in Midnapore district, said, "On returning to Bengal after two weeks I find the situation has badly deteriorated. Any statement about existing conditions involves a contradiction of everything which has been said by Mr. Amery regarding the Bengal food crisis during the past weeks."

The possible partition of India was discussed by the Indian representative in the War Council, Sir A. R. Mudaliar in an introductory discussion on "India and the Four Freedoms, in a broadcast by the B. B. C. from London.

- 26th. His Excellency the Viceroy accompanied by Lady Wavell and the Bengal Governor, Sir Thomas Rutherford, went round the streets of Calcutta, visiting some of the areas where the shelterless refugees were lying about.

A statement was issued by the Committee of the Calcutta Branch of the European Association urging inquiry into the food situation in Bengal.

- 27th. The following announcement was issued from 10, Downing street, London, which stated *inter alia* : "War needs have led to the establishment in India of branches and agencies of certain departments of the U. K. Government and H. Q. of the S. E. Asia Command. The Viceroy of India has been invited by the War Cabinet to undertake on their behalf certain administrative and co-ordinating functions which arise from these developments and which fall outside the responsibilities of the Government of India and of himself as Governor-General."

- 28th. The food situation in India was again raised in the House of Commons. Mr. Amery in reply to Mr. Sorenson said : "The Government of India has been in the closest consultation with Indian representatives of various political points of view.....I have no doubt that this policy of full discussion with representative Indians will continue." He added : "It is estimated that between Aug. 15 and Oct. 16, about 8000 persons died in Calcutta from causes directly or indirectly due to malnutrition. I have no reliable figures for the whole of India."

- 29th. In White Paper published in London, the Bengal famine was attributed to the fall of Burma, the Cyclone of Oct. 1942, the hoarding resulting from the fall of Burma and the air raids on Calcutta and the floods which breached the main railway lines to the Presidency.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, President of the Servants of India Society, in a statement to the Press in Calcutta, welcomed the decision taken at the food conference, H. E. the Viceroy presiding, to place the services of a Major-General at the disposal of the Bengal Government to assist them in moving food grains from Calcutta to the districts affected by the emergency.

- 30th. Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister, Punjab, issued a statement in regard to wheat prices and in respect of the disposal of the surplus foodgrains.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Secretary, All-India Muslim League and Nawab Md. Ismail Khan, Chairman, All-India Muslim League Defence Committee, in a statement to the Press described their impressions of the distress in Bengal.

- 31st. Interviewed on the Bengal famine situation, Mr. Jinnah said : "At this grave moment of terrible plight and suffering in Bengal and the appalling death roll that is daily issued, I would not like to say anything as to who is really responsible for allowing this tragic situation to develop."

In pursuance of the Government plan to repatriate destitutes from Calcutta, about 3,000 of them were collected from the streets and sent to initial reception centres in the City.

November 1943

H. M. the King, in his speech proroguing the Parliament, referred to India and said *inter alia* : "The perseverance and industry of my People in the United Kingdom have been emulated by my peoples in the Dominions and Colonial territories and in India. I trust that the special hardships which the war has lately brought on many among my Indian subjects will be relieved and that the steps my Government

have already taken will assist the Government in India in relieving the grave shortage of food in certain areas in India."

The Corporation of Calcutta passed a resolution demanding the appointment of a royal commission to inquire into the causes of the famine in Bengal.

His Majesty the King approved the appointment of Lt. Gen. A. G. O. M. Mayne, C.B., D.O.C., to be G. O. C.-in-C, Eastern Command, India.

Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, observed in the House of Commons, re : food crisis in India : "In the last three months every effort has been made to get food through to Bengal from the rest of India. The efforts to control prices in India are showing some signs of success."

In the House of Lords, Lord Strathclyde wanted to introduce a Bill to apply the Statute of Westminster to India.

The Central Legislative Assembly began its autumn session in New Delhi. The President, Sir Abdur Rahim read a message from the Viceroy.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India announced in the Central Assembly that six shiploads of foodgrains had arrived in India.

Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to questions in the House of Commons on the Indian famine, said that encouraging results had been achieved in Bengal. He also said that the troops were being allocated to the worst affected districts in Bengal to assist the civil authorities in the movement of grain to the villages, military transport being used when possible.

The All-India Muslim League Council re-elected Mr. M. A. Jinnah as President of the League for the next year.

The Council of the All-India Muslim League concluded its session in New Delhi after passing a resolution on the food situation in India.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Government accepted a resolution asking that the Army should be thrown open to members of the scheduled castes and that military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes.

Mr. John Sargent, Education Commissioner with the Government of India, explained the scheme of educational reconstruction in a teachers' meeting in New Delhi. Mr. Sargent said that the scheme sought to provide free, compulsory and universal education in India.

Sir J. P. Srivastava announced in the Council of State that the Government of India had decided to become responsible for the feeding of greater Calcutta.

H. H. the Maharaja of Nepal, as a mark of his sympathetic concern for Bengal's plight, spontaneously offered to release stocks of rice and paddy in Nepal which were surplus to his country's requirements for export to the Province.

The Government of India decided to reinstate the Maharaja of Rewa, subject to certain conditions which had been accepted by His Highness.

1st. A resolution demanding the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the causes of the famine in Bengal was passed by the Calcutta Corporation.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, President, Servants of India Society, who visited certain parts of the coastal districts of Orissa, said in Cuttack : "My impression is that while the area in districts in Orissa is smaller than in Bengal, the distress in the affected areas is nearly as acute as in any of the districts of Bengal that I have visited".

The twelfth session of the National Defence Council opened at the Viceroy's House, New Delhi, H. E. the Viceroy presided.

2nd. Madame Chiang-Kai-Shek was elected honorary Chairman of the India famine Relief Association inaugurated in Chungking at a meeting organised by the Sino-Indian Cultural Association.

A demand for action to release famine distress in India was made by M. P's, religious leaders and others at a London meeting arranged by the India Relief Committee.

The Hon. Major Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, Premier, in the course of a statement in the Punjab Assembly, said that more than half of the total of civil disobedience detenus, who were arrested since August 1942, had already been released.

Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, in the course of his talk in the B. B. C. Round Table discussion on "India and the four freedoms" (London), said: "India would be willing to join an 'international community' on a global organisation of the future in which she would have a position of independence as well as inter-dependence".

Major General A. V. T. Wakely, who was deputed by the Army authorities at the instance of the Viceroy to take charge of the control of movement of food-grains in the province (Bengal) met Mr. H. S. Surhawardy, Minister for Civil Supplies, Mr. H. E. S. Stevens, Food Commissioner and Mr. N. M. Ayyar, Director of Civil Supplies at the directorate of Civil Supplies (Calcutta), when the transport position in respect of the movement of food-grains was discussed. A plan for the improvement of the arrangements for despatching food-grains to the mofussil was also considered at the meeting.

3rd. His Majesty the King approved the appointment of Lt. Gen. A. G. O. M. Mayne, C. B., D. S. O. to be G. O. C.-in-C. Eastern Command, India.

The provisions of the Bengal Rationing order were published in the Calcutta Gazette, which would apply to the whole of Bengal.

Under the order, rationed articles would be distributed in rationed areas through wholesale and retail dealers and proprietors of establishments appointed by Government for the purpose.

The National Defence Council met again at the Viceroy's House in New Delhi. H. E. the Viceroy presided.

4th. Mr. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, during the debate in the House of Commons on the food crisis in India, ordered: "In the last three months every effort has been made to get food through to Bengal from the rest of India. The efforts to control prices in India are showing some signs of success." He also declared "The Government of India has made great efforts to cope with the situation. Their chief problem has been high prices and local shortage, both essentially due to maldistribution."

5th. In the House of Lords, Lord Strabogli sought leave, on his own initiative, to introduce a Bill to apply the Statute of Westminster to India.

The Government of India appointed a Committee to satisfy themselves that there was no excessive profits in the prices charged for wheat products at subsequent stages in Bengal.

Sir Sultan Ahmed, Information and Broadcasting Member, Government of India, addressing the first meeting of the publicity Advisory Committee, explained the working of the Government of India's publicity organisation.

6th. The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference in New Delhi, passed among others the following resolution: "The Committee records its emphatic protest against the action of the C. P. Government in demanding from the Editor of the *Hitavada* the source of his information in regard to the publication of a news item concerning the resignation of the Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government as unwarranted interference with the well-established convention governing the relation between an editor and his correspondents."

The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, Premier of Orissa, in a statement on the food situation in Orissa, made it clear that there was no attempt on his part to draw a curtain over the sufferings that existed among the people of N. Balasore, parts of Puri district and the coastal areas of Ganjam.

7th. General Sir Claude Auchinleck, at a press conference in New Delhi, gave details of how the army was helping to cope with the Bengal famine. His Excellency revealed that several thousand troops were being employed on this work including a number of motorised units. He said: "Troops already in Bengal have started work, and other troops are on the move, some of them

from long distances. Nine hundred tons of food daily have been sent, since they started from Calcutta to some 23 distribution centres in the mofussil."

Sir H. P. Mody and Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker, former members of the Viceroy's Council, in a statement jointly issued from Calcutta, said: "Lord Wavell has begun well. He has inaugurated his regime with a determined attack on the food muddle, which has aroused the attention of the world. There is every reason to hope that, from the point of view of administration, his tenure of office will be characterised by vigour and direction of action. Has not India, however, a right to expect something from a Viceroy of such outstanding qualities and such a close and up to-date acquaintance with Indian problems?"

- 8th. The Central Legislative Assembly began its autumn session in New Delhi, when the President, Sir Abdur Rahim, read a message from the Viceroy. The Viceroy's message read, "It is customary for a new Viceroy to address both houses of the Indian Legislature at the first opportunity. I have decided to depart from the precedent and shall deliver no address during the November session.....for the time being my energy must be very largely devoted to the study and treatment of the food problem—a matter upon which I do not feel that I could make a comprehensive statement in the immediate future. It is my intention to address both chambers at an early stage of the Budget session of 1944."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport Member, replying to Mr. K. C. Neogy, announced that the coal rationing scheme had now been put into operation. He stated that a total of 25.64 million tons a year had been adopted as a reasonable figure which could be made available for distribution. Rations had been fixed on the basis of actual supplies made during the 12 months period from August 1942 to July 1943 and took into account estimated increases in the consumption of essential services.

Mr. Govind Doshmukh moved his adjournment motion in the Assembly to censure Government on its "unwise decision to send non-official gentlemen selected by it to undertake a tour abroad and to speak on India's war effort."

The demand for a full enquiry into the food situation was supported by three parties in the Assembly.

His Excellency Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras addressing a meeting at Ouddappah, observed: "It has been my concern and the concern of my government to see that food is within the reach of every one. We have spent the worst days. Now with the prospect of getting good harvest which is in sight, we hope to solve the problem most satisfactorily."

- 9th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, stated that six shiploads of foodgrains had arrived in India and although he did not know the actual tonnage he thought it was about 30,000 and more was coming. He said that the price at which wheat was landed in India was substantially low.

Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, in accepting a resolution of the Muslim League Party, urging stabilisation of prices, said: "We have reached a stage at which in order to maintain the war effort it is necessary to cater for civilian requirements."

- 10th. General Sir Claude Auchinleck, C-in-C, India, issued an appeal on the Poppy Day for funds to help all ex-servicemen.

The Punjab Assembly Muslim League Party at a meeting in Lahore, passed an amendment to its constitution subjecting its members to the control and discipline of the All-India Muslim League Parliamentary Board.

- 11th. Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to a number of questions in the House of Commons on the Indian famine, told a questioner that encouraging results had been achieved on Budget. He was answering questions by Mr. Nicholson (Conser), whom he told that troops were being allocated to the worst affected districts in Bengal to assist the Civil authorities in the movement of grain to villages, military transport being used where possible. The military would also assist in providing temporary shelters for the people. Arrangements for close liaison with the civil authorities had been made and medical appliances and personnel were being made available.

In the Dail, (Ireland) an estimate for £200,000, was introduced for alleviation of distress due to war and famine in Europe and India.

A resolution in the name of Mr. G. S. Motilal seeking "to convey to His Majesty's government that the people of India do not want Mr. Amery to hold the office of the Secretary of State for India any longer," secured the first place

in the ballot of for non-official resolutions for November 24 in the Council of State.

- 12th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, initiating the debate on the food situation, Sir J. P. Srivastava, food member, said that as against the Bengal Governor's estimate of Bengal's requirements for the three months, October to December, of 250,000 tons, 82,000 were sent during October. "We hope," he said, "that our arrangements will secure that figure given by the Governor will be substantially exceeded."

At the adjourned meeting of the Working Committee of Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha held in Calcutta, a resolution demanding the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the causes of the Bengal famine was passed.

The food crisis in Bengal was one of the subjects considered by the council of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League at its meeting in Calcutta.—The Council was of opinion that the crisis was "due to the policy of the bureaucracy" and condemned Mr. L. S. Amery and the party who had tried to shirk their own responsibility and foist it on provincial autonomy.

A Communique stated that the Bihar Provincial Government decided to increase certain fees and duties which did not form an essential element in the cost of living with a view to checking the growing inflationary tendency in the Province.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Mr. Govind Deshmukh asked for information about the disabilities and restriction imposed on Indians in the United State and the proposal to exempt the Chinese from similar restrictions. Sir Sultan Ahmed said that the Government of India were not in possession of exact details but they understood that the common object of the legislation before the United States Congress in this connexion was to lift existing restrictions on Chinese immigration and the acquisition of American citizenship by resident Chinese. The Agent General for India lost no time in approaching the State Department as to the possibility of parity of treatment for Indian nationals and his final report was awaited.

- 13th. A Press Note from New Delhi said : "The flow of foodgrains to Calcutta continues and grains are moved as fast as they are available."

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, replying to Mr. K. C. Neogy, made a statement on charges and counter-charges of Provincial Governments against each other in regard to alleged profiteering in respect of food supplies to Bengal.

The Central Assembly dealt with five official Bills.—One of them was Dr. Ambedkar's Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions mainly for compulsory recognition of Trade Unions under certain conditions and defining what recognition would imply. The House agreed to circulate the Bill for eliciting public opinion.

- 14th. The All-India Muslim League Council re-elected Mr. M. A. Jinnah as President of the League for the next year. The Secretary's announcement that no other name had been suggested by any Provincial League was greeted with loud applause.

In the meeting of the Council of A. I. Muslim League (in New Delhi) a ban was imposed on the members of the League joining the Khaksar movement.

Dr. H. N. Kunzru, who toured Bengal and Orissa, studying famine conditions there, said in a statement that Orissa was a poor province hence it should have received special consideration at the hands of the Central authorities. But instead of showing any sympathy "they have accentuated its misfortunes by their policy."

Under the auspices of the National Council of Women in India, the legal status of women was the subject of a conference which commenced in Bombay.—In the absence of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Rt. Hon. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, delivered the presidential Address and inaugurated the conference.

- 15th. The Council of State met in New Delhi with Sir Maneckji Dadabhoi in the chair. Malik Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Defence Member, H. E. Prior, Secretary, Labour Department, Sir N. Gopalawami Iyengar, ex-Prime Minister, Kashmir, Mr. B. Das and Mr. B. R. Sen, Director General of Food were the five new members who were sworn in. The President read H. E. the Viceroy's message to the Legislature. The members of the Progressive and Muslim League parties remained seated.

The Council of the All-India Muslim League concluded its session in New-Delhi passing a resolution on the food situation in India.

The C-in-C, in India, General Sir Claude Auchinleck, reviewed the war situation in reply to a question in the Council of State.

The Central Legislative Assembly continued the debate on the food situation, Sir Chhotu Ram, Punjab Minister, sat in the visitors' gallery.

The Government of Madras decided to re-open toddy and foreign liquor shops in Salem and three other prohibition districts in the province with effect from January 1 and to suspend the operation of certain provisions of the Prohibition Act for the purpose.

- 16th. In the Central Legislative Assembly, the President Sir Abdur Rahim ruled out of order Sir A. H. Ghuznavi's adjournment motion to discuss "the failure of the Government of India to persuade H. M. G. to implement their guarantee of independence to the Lebanon and to restrain the French Committee from acting in a tyrannical and oppressive manner which is so prejudicial to the progress of the war and the solidarity of the United Nations".

The food debate in the Central Assembly entered its 3rd day.

- 17th. The Central Legislative Assembly disposed of the five remaining official Bills and devoted the rest of the sitting to discussing food crisis.

The House passed Sir Azizul Haque's two Bills, one to amend the Tea Control Act and the other to amend the Indian Companies Act.

The Council of State discussed non-official resolutions. Mr. Hossain Imam moved a resolution urging the grant of Rs. 7,00,00,000 or more to Bengal, to meet the emergency of food shortage. He was supported by Mr. S. M. Padshah, Kumar Shankar Roy Chowdhury and Rai Bahadur Srinarain Mahatha.

During the fortnight ending 13th November, 1,113 bodies of destitutes were picked up by the police from the streets in the city of Calcutta while the number of such persons dying in the various hospitals totalled 1,014. Deaths from all causes recorded by the Calcutta Corporation during the period numbered 3,835 as against 1,290 in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year.

- 18th. The Central Legislative Assembly concluded the debate on the foodcrisis in India when all amendments to the Food Member's proposal, that the food situation be taken into consideration by the House, were rejected.

The Muslim League's amendment asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission was rejected by 41 votes to 26, the Congress Party, the Nationalists and some unattached members not voting. The other amendments were all rejected without a division.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, (Food Member) replying on the debate said he was not prepared to accept any of the amendments. This, he declared, was not the time for an inquiry. He was not, however, baulking or avoiding an inquiry undertaken at the proper time, and he would place before H. M. G. a full report of the debate in the House.

- 19th. The functions of the Army in relation to famine relief work in Bengal were explained by Lt-Gen. A. G. O. M. Mayne, G. O. C., in-C, Eastern Command at a Press Conference in Calcutta.

The Bengal Government's scheme regarding aman (winter) rice crop was placed before leaders of various parties in the Bengal Legislature at a Conference held in Calcutta.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Government accepted a resolution asking that the Army should be thrown open to members of the scheduled castes and that military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes.

The Council of State began a three day debate on the food situation in the country.

- 20th. In the Council of State three amendments were moved to the food motion of Mr. B. R. Sen, Director General of Food. Two amendments by Mr. H. R. Parker and Mr. Hossain Imam, each demanded a Royal Commission, while Mr. P. N. Saprú wanted a Judicial Committee to hold an inquiry into the food condition.

The death occurred in Calcutta of Mr. Durga Prasad Khaitan. He was the senior Vice-President of the Indian Chamber of Commerce.

- 21st. The inaugural meeting of the Indian Council of World Affairs was held in New Delhi - Sir Tej Bahadur Saprú presided.

- 22nd. The High Commissioner for India, Sir Samuel Runganadhan, gave his views on how he thought India would regard the question of freedom of expression when she achieved full political freedom.

Mr. John Sargent, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India addressing a teachers' meeting in New Delhi explained the scheme of educational reconstruction. The scheme, Mr. Sargent said, sought to provide free, compulsory and universal education in India.

Dr. B. S. Moonje, opening the Barrackpore Hindu Mahasabha Conference, gave a picture of the misery which he saw in the course of his tour in some of the famine affected areas in Bengal. Dr. Moonje made a number of suggestions for relieving distress and rehabilitating people in their own villages.—Mr. N. C. Chatterjee presided. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji was among those who addressed the conference.

- 23rd. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, announced in the Council of State that the Government of India had decided to become responsible for the feeding of greater Calcutta.

In the Council of State, Mr. B. R. Sen, Director General Food, made a statement in reply to the allegation that the Government of India had made a profit out of the food situation.

The formation was announced in New York, of an Emergency Committee for Indian Famine Relief to co-operate with the British, Chinese and others in meeting the food crisis in India.—The Committee consisted exclusively of American citizens and its members included Mrs. Clare Book Luce, Member of Congress and Miss Pearl Buck, author of 'Good Earth.'

- 24th. H. M. the King in his speech proroguing the Parliament, referred to India and said : "The perseverance and industry of my people in the United Kingdom have been emulated by my peoples in my Dominions and Colonial territories and in India. I trust that the special hardships which the war has lately brought on many among my Indian subjects will be relieved and that the steps my Government have already taken will assist the Government in India in relieving the grave shortage of food in certain areas in India."

- Sardar Baldev Singh, Food Minister, Punjab, commented on the Food Member's statement in the Central Assembly on the purchase of foodgrains from surplus provinces, when he spoke at a conference in Lahore.

The Council of State rejected without a division Pandit Kunzru's resolution urging government to remove all restrictions on the publication of news not relating to the war and, in particular, news relating to internal political conditions and economic well-being of the people and to persuade Provincial Governments to adopt the same policy.

- 25th. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy Minister for Civil Supplies, Bengal, in a statement said :—"It must be a great relief to the people of Bengal that the responsibility of supplying greater Calcutta, with a population now approximating 4,500,000, and with a consumption of 60,000 tons of foodgrains per month, has been undertaken by the Government of India with supplies from outside. This is bound to give the necessary confidence to the people of Bengal regarding supplies and the return to normal conditions."

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, in a statement from Bombay, said : "I call upon every Hindu organization and individual to follow the lead given by the Bombay provincial and some other Hindu Sabhas and send all help to feed, clothe and shelter Hindu sufferers in Bengal."

- 26th. H. H. the Maharaja of Nepal, as a mark of his sympathetic concern for Bengal's plight, spontaneously offered to release stocks of rice and paddy in Nepal which were surplus to his country's requirements for export to the province.

Dr. M. R. Jayakar, in his convocation address at the Patna University, mooted a plan emphasising how best Indian universities could help promote measures of national education.

H. E. the Governor of Madras addressing a public meeting at Devakottah made an emphatic refutation that anyone died of starvation in the Ceded Districts. His Excellency added that the Madras Government would not be deterred by financial considerations from carrying out its foremost duty to see that everyone in the presidency was properly fed and clothed.

- 27th. It was understood that the Government of India would make arrangements to import into Bengal 546,000 tons of foodgrains during 1944, for the purpose of implementing their decision to relieve the Bengal Government of the responsibility of feeding greater Calcutta.

- 28th. A Press note issued by the Assistant Director of Public Relations, E. Command, stated : More than 50,000 tons of foodstuffs have so far been taken

by the Army on behalf of the Bengal Government from Calcutta to distribution centres in the province. From November 6 to 26, the average daily quantity sent out from Calcutta to selected places in the distressed areas was approximately 2,000 tons."

Mr. Mahommed Ahmed Iadwat and Swami Bhawani Dayal, representatives of the South African Indian Congress in India, in a joint statement from Bombay pointed out the need for the Government of India to be represented on the proposed Commission to inquire into the Natal Indian question, which the South African Government was expected to appoint.

- 29th. The Government of India decided to reinstate the Maharaja of Rewa, subject to certain conditions which had been accepted by His Highness.

Mr. W. G. Cove, Labour M. P., addressing the Indian Famine Committee (in London) of which he was the Chairman, said : "There is only one principal way of solving the Indian problem, and that is by recognizing now in practice the right of India to self-government, self-determination and independence."

Kumar Ganganand Sinha, President of the Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha Conference at Chapra, declared : The acuteness of the food problem in the country has brought into prominent relief the hollowness of the Pakistan theory and we have seen that one province cannot pull on without the help and sympathy of the other, provided that India is and must remain one and undivided."

- 30th. Maulana Md. Ruhlel Amin announced (from Calcutta) the resignation of his membership and vice-presidentship of the Provincial Muslim League.—In a statement, he said : "In my absence and without my consent the Bengal Provincial Muslim League at the annual meeting held at the Muslim Institute on November 6, co-opted me as a member and elected me as one of the vice-presidents. I do hereby with all my sincerity and firmness, decline the said membership and vice-presidentship of the League".

December 1943

The Government of Bengal decided to prohibit all exports of rice and paddy from Bengal and to proceed with the rationing of the more important urban areas in the province in addition to the rationing of Calcutta.

The Federal Court unanimously upheld the validity of the Ordinance validating sentences passed by the Special Criminal Courts and decided that the provision in Sec. 3 of the Validating Ordinance was not *ultra vires* of the Governor General.

Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to a question in the House of Commons, re : food situation in India said : "Military assistance in Bengal is getting into its stride and outlying centres as well as Calcutta are now receiving adequate supplies."

There was an air aid in Calcutta by the Japanese, in broad daylight.

Mr. Amery once again assured the House of Commons, re : Indian food situation, that every possible step was taken to meet the emergency.

The Secretary of State for India paid a tribute to the Indian Princes, speaking at a dinner in London.

His Excellency the Viceroy granted one lakh of Rupees to Orissa for the establishment of an orphanage.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar asked the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha to request Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee to continue to act as President.

Lord Linlithgow, speaking at London, said that India had made a magnificent contribution towards Allied Victory.

H. M. the King approved the appointment of Hon. R. G. Casey to be the Governor of Bengal.

The 31st Session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Karachi, Mr. M. A. Jinnah presided. He was willing to come to terms with the British Government or the Hindus "on honourable terms and no other terms".

A resolution was passed in the Session of the All-India Muslim League, appointing a Committee of Action to prepare and organize the Muslims of the whole of India for the achievement of Pakistan.

The 25th Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha was held at Amritsar, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee presided. In his speech he laid stress on the invulnerability of Indian culture and the remarkable spirit of assimilation.

The All-India Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution reiterating its firm faith in the integrity of India and its determination to resist all attempts made in any quarter for its vivisection. The Mahasabha also demanded the release of political prisoners and the immediate declaration of India's independence.

The 24th Session of the National Liberal Federation of India was held in Bombay, Sir Maharaj Singh presided. He suggested the release of Mahatma Gandhi. A resolution was passed urging the Government of India to release Congress Leaders and asking the Congress to treat the August Resolution of 1942 as a dead letter.

1st. The Government of Bengal, in Press Note announced: "The Bengal Government have decided to prohibit all exports of rice and paddy from Bengal, and to proceed with the rationing of the more important urban areas in the province in addition to the rationing of Calcutta and the neighbouring industrial area."

The federal court unanimously upheld the validity of the ordinance validating sentences passed by the special Criminal Courts and decided that the provision in Sec. 3 of the Validating Ordinance was not ultra vires of the Governor General.

The judgment was delivered in a series of 19 cases, arising from the 1942 disturbances in Bihar, U.P., C.P., and Madras.

Sir Azizul Haque, Commerce Member, Government of India reiterated at Bangalore, the determination of the Government of India not to extend the time-limit beyond December 31, 1943, for the disposal of unstamped cotton goods by dealers.

2nd Mr. L. S. Amery, replying to a question about the food situation in India, said in the House of Commons: "The most important development in the Indian food situation in the last few weeks is that the main rice crop, which is just coming to harvest, is reported to be excellent, particularly in Bengal. Military assistance in Bengal is getting into its stride and outlying centres as well as Calcutta are now receiving adequate supplies, though distribution from these centres to more remote villages still present a problem. Plans for rationing in urban areas are proceeding and should be in operation in Calcutta by the middle of this month."

3rd. Mr. C. C. Desai, Controller General of Civil Supplies said in an interview in Bombay: "Prices of consumer goods are still at pre-ordinance level and the campaign against profiteering will be intensified during the next two weeks when shopping generally is brisk owing to Christmas."

4th. Maj. General D. Stuart, O.C., Military Forces, Famine Relief, Bengal, in a broadcast talk from Calcutta, surveyed how the military was assisting the Bengal Government in relief operation in the outlying districts.

The two Indian unofficial lecturers, Dr. Ghiasuddin and Mr. Bhole, who came to tell British audiences about India's war efforts opened their programme in London with a Press Conference at the Ministry of Information.

Tributes to the qualities of Dr. Rajendra Prasad both as a politician and as a man were paid at a public meeting in Patna to celebrate his 59th. birthday.

5th. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, received a deputation in Cambridge on the Indian famine question.

Mr. R. F. Mudie, Governor of Bihar, addressing the Provincial War Committee in Patna, said: "If our morale is good and our administration capable of standing the strain, we can trust our Army to win. If we break down, the Army can do little or nothing."

Japanese aircraft raided the Calcutta area. It was the enemy's first daylight attack on the City.

6th. At the annual general meeting of the Indian freedom campaign committee, (in London) under the Chairmanship of Miss Ethel Mannin, a demand for the inalienable right for trial by jury of political prisoners was made by Mr. Reginald Reynolds.

7th. At a Press Conference in Calcutta, Malik Sir Feroz Khan Noon, Defence Member of the Government of India, explained certain civil defence aspects arising from the Japanese raid on the Calcutta area.

8th. The Punjab Government decided to introduce wheat rationing in Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi from March, 1944, announced Mr. F. B. Wace, Secretary, Supplies and Transport Department at a press conference in Lahore.

9th. Mr. L. S. Amery gave written replies to several questions about India in the House of Commons. He said: "The nearest territories providing normal food reserves of India are in enemy occupation and most of the other countries in the Indian Ocean area are affected at least much as India by the loss of these potential imports."

Mr. Amery declared, in an exclusive interview, Britain's policy in India, in the past, present and the future, is guided by the principles of the Atlantic Charter."

10th. Mr. L. S. Amery, speaking in Birmingham said: "I think I can say with some confidence that so far as actual supply of food to Bengal is concerned, we are turning the corner. There will still be anxiety about getting supplies out to some of the more outlying villages and there is now serious anxiety about the increase of malaria, cholera and other diseases among the population weakened by malnutrition. Every possible measure is being taken to meet the emergency."

11th. A communique issued from Government House, Calcutta, stated: It is announced with profound regret that Sir John Arthur Herbert, G.C.I.E., lately Governor of Bengal, passed away at 8-50 p.m. on Saturday December 11."

12th. Sir Sultan Ahmed, Information Member, Government of India in a broadcast speech from Calcutta, re: food and civil defence in Bengal said that the problem which had "darkened the fair face of Bengal" was now yielding to combined effort, thanks to the energetic action taken by the Provincial Government, the help given by the Army, the generous supply of foodgrains by the Government of India and to the provision of medicine and foodstuff by Britain and the Empire.

A communique issued by the Punjab Government announced its decision to introduce price control and rationing in the Province in accordance with the general food policy of the Government of India.

Their Excellencies the Viceroy and Lady Wavell completed their visit to public institutions in Outback.

Sir S. Radha Krishnan, Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University, in his presidential address to the meeting of the Inter-University Board at the Omania University, declared: "Education is the root of the whole problem of future reconstruction and if India is to find its proper place in the new order, the education of its people will have to be taken up in great earnestness."

13th. In a "Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary" the Bengal Government notified that from December 20 rice and paddy should not be moved by any person, except under a permit, outside the following 12 districts: Midnapore, Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan, Malda, Dinajpore, Jalpaiguri, Rajsahi, Bogra, Mymensingh, Bakarganj and Khulna.

14th. Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India arrived in Calcutta.

The Government of India announced: "With effect from the 15th January 1944 and until further notice, the Government of India will issue 5 years interest free prize bonds, 1949. The bonds will be repaid at par in 1949."

15th. Sir S. Radhakrishnan, President of the Fifth Session of the uninquennial Conference of Universities in India which opened at Hyderabad (Dn.), said: "If the sequel to victory is not to be frustration, the urge to return to

prewar habits and procedures in relations among nations, requires to be checked. We need re-education of human nature and reorganization of our political and economic institutions."

16th. Reports from various Bengal districts showed that while famine relief work under official and non-official auspices was continuing, the price of new rice was going up almost every where and the incidence of malaria and other diseases showed no sign of abatement.

17th. Mr. V. D. Savarkar informed the working committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha that, owing to ill-health, he would be unable to attend or preside over the annual session of the Mahasabha or the working committee meeting at Amritsar. He asked that in accordance with the constitution, the working President, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukerjee should be requested to continue to act as President.

18th. Sir C V. Raman presiding, the second anniversary of the Vellore Cultural League was celebrated in the Government Mahamedan High School, Vellore. He observed : "There was no great difference between the spirit of a great painter, a great sculptor, a great man of letter, a great musician, a great scientist &c. Essentially, they are all engaged in creative work, which essentially added to the sum total of human culture. In India, they had an age old culture, sense of values, appreciation of the things of the spirit, and reverence and respect for the lives of great thinkers and the past. If they understood the culture of the country aright, which had been many sided, they could not afford to neglect the lessons of science. Let them not imagine that all the discoveries of science should be misused."

19th. The Sind Ministry's attitude to the direction given by the Government of India to the Provincial Government not to raise the prices of foodgrains without their consent was embodied in a statement issued by the Ministry.

Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, expressed the opinion in Calcutta that normal trade channels should be utilized as far as possible in both the procurement and distribution of foodstuffs by the Government.

20th. His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, addressing the annual general meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, Calcutta, emphasized that he was prepared to take drastic action to ensure support for the Central Government's famine relief policy for Bengal.—This policy entailed measures for the strict enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order, prevention of speculation and the regulation and control of prices. In this task public co-operation was essential.

Lord Wavell sounded a note of warning that the general assistance accorded to Bengal by the Central Government could not continue indefinitely.

Lord Wavell, referring to the political deadlock in India, said that although he had the fullest sympathy with the aspirations of India towards self-Government, the future of India depended today on the winning of the war, the organization of the economic home front, and the preparations for peace.

21st. Sir Hugh Dow, Governor of Sind, addressing a district war committee meeting at Sehwan, said : "I hope you will not listen to those who tell you through greed that you should clamour for still higher prices which will cause distress to your own poor, and will keep those in other Indian Provinces on the verge of starvation."

Sir Homi Modi, in his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Employers' Federation of India held in Calcutta, said the employer, who was out of tune with the humanitarian spirit of the age or who refused to adjust himself to the fast-changing conditions of the industrial world, was happily disappearing. At any rate, like other anachronisms, he had a poor chance of survival.

At the 18th. annual session of the Indian Philosophy Congress which met in Lahore, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, President, gave a call to Indian philosophers to reestablish faith in the moral values of life and the dignity of human personality.

22nd. Mr. M. L. Shah in his presidential address at the quarterly general meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta, referred to Calcutta's food rationing scheme.

23rd. A Communique from New Delhi stated: "H. M. the King has approved the appointment of the Rt. Hon. Richard Gardiner Casey, D. S. O., M. C., at present Minister of State in the Middle East to be Governor of Bengal."

Mr. M. H. Gazdar, Minister of Information, Sind, in an interview at Karachi, said: "The recent anti-hoarding order for wheat, making it an offence for anybody to keep more than a certain amount of wheat after January 15, 1944, was issued by the Governor under his special responsibility without the concurrence of his Ministers."

Mr. M. A. Jinnah, President-elect of the All-India Muslim League session at Karachi, was taken in procession to Haroonabad to unfurl the League Flag.

24th. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in his speech before the 31st session of the All-India Muslim League at Karachi said: "If they want to come to terms with us, we are always ready and willing to come to terms with the British Government or the Hindus on honourable terms and on no other terms."

25th. The Subjects Committee of the All-India Muslim League adopted three main resolutions: Appointment of a Committee of Action to prepare and organize the Muslims of the whole of India for the achievement of Pakistan, formulation of a five year plan for the economic and social uplift of the Muslim nation and demand for a comprehensive price control policy together with procurement and rationing of foodstuffs.

26th. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, delivering his presidential address at the 25th Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Amritsar, said: "Though political freedom has been denied to India for the last 200 years and her original inhabitants were for many centuries deprived of their supreme hold upon their own country, Indian Culture has remained unconquered from generation to generation. The invader came and went; kings, emperors and generals appeared and disappeared but the soul of India remains unconquered. It is her remarkable spirit of assimilation which turned generation of conquerors and invaders into ultimate contributors to the growth of the mighty civilization."

The session of the Muslim League terminated after all the six resolutions adopted by the Subjects Committee were passed unanimously without a single amendment being moved.

27th. The open session of the Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution emphasizing that the Sabha 'alone is competent to carry on negotiations on behalf of the Hindus, and any situation without the Sabha's approval will not be binding on the Hindus and the Mahasabha.'

The subjects committee of the Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution reiterating its firm faith in the integrity of India and its determination to resist all attempts made in any quarter for its vivisection.

The Mahasabha by a third resolution called upon Government to release without any delay all Congress prisoners who have been confined or detained without any judicial trial.

28th. The demand for the immediate declaration of India's independence and for the immediate formation of a National Government was made in a resolution adopted by the subjects committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

29th. Sir Maharaj Singh in his presidential address at the 4th session of the National Liberal Federation of India held in Bombay, made the suggestion that the Viceroy and the Government of India should allow an approach to be made to Mahatma Gandhi as soon as possible with a view to ending a solution of the political tangle, if necessary, enabling him to consult the members of the Congress Working Committee.

Dr. Khan Sahib of the N. W. F. Province in an interview at Lahore, observed: "Pakistan has been a phantom in the imagination of certain people and it will always remain an illusion to them in their dreams until they wake up to the hard realities of life".

30th. The Subjects Committee of the All-India National Liberal Federation, passed a resolution urging the Government of India to release Congress leaders and asking the Congress to treat the August 1942 Resolution as a dead letter.

India in Home Polity

Introduction

In the last volume of the "Indian Annual Register" (January—June, 1943) we made an attempt to understand the many factors that co-operated to create the famine in Bengal which reached its peak of death and desolation in the last four months of the year. This catastrophe thus forms part of the study made in the present volume. But we anticipated in the last volume discussion of many of the measures taken by the Government of Lord Linlithgow which released over the country forces of corruption and shameless greed that traded in the food-grains of the people and thus traded with their life. Writing after twelve months of that desolate experience, not one amongst the many men and women that have tried to trace the processes of this tragedy can succeed in giving a full picture of these. The Government has appointed an enquiry commission presided over by Sir John Woodhead, a former governor of Bengal, who had passed almost all his career in the province. The enquiry has been conducted behind the *purdah*, for fear of making the proceedings a subject of heated political controversy. So, it can be said that the public has been thinking of this matter and judging it in the absence of full facts. One of the most dispassionate of studies on the 1943 famine that we have come across has been written by Sri Kali Charan Ghosh, Curator of the Commercial Museum maintained by the Corporation of Calcutta. With a passionless accuracy the writer has traced certain of the processes with which the mischief started. The title of his book is—*Famines in Bengal (1170—1943)*. These two catastrophes separated by a distance in time of one hundred and seventy-three years are marked by similarities that show that human nature has not much changed during these years. Nature was cruel to Bengal—Behar and parts of Orissa were included within this presidency at that time—in refusing to help to raise the food-crops. But men, the rulers and ruled who co-operated with the former in carrying on the administration, were incompetent and corrupt, and by their practices intensified the sufferings of the people. Sir William Hunter in his *Annals of Rural Bengal* has drawn for us a picture of these that is startlingly similar to things that we have seen happen during 1943:

"The inability of the Government to appreciate the true character of the calamity (1770) is rendered more remarkable by the circumstance that at that period the local administration continued in the hands of the former native officers. A Muslim Minister of State regulated the whole internal government.....These men (native officers) knew the country, its capabilities, its average yield and its average requirements with an accuracy that the most painstaking English official can seldom hope to attain to. They had a strong interest in representing things to be worse than they were ; for the more intense the scarcity, the greater the merit in collecting the land-tax. Every consultation is filled with their apprehensions and highly-coloured accounts of the public distress ; but it does not appear that the conviction entered the minds of the Council during the previous months, that the question was not so much one of revenue as of depopulation. This misconception, strange as it may appear, is susceptible of explanation.....Local officials might

write alarming reports, but their apprehensions seem to be contradicted by the apparent quiet that prevails."

We do not propose to rub in the meaning of these words as it applied to the Ministry during whose time famine took its toll of millions of men, women and children. Mr. Fazlul Huq during whose Ministry the first signs of the catastrophe made their appearance has put up a defence that threw back the whole blame on the then Governor of Bengal, the late Sir John Herbert and his official advisers, who ignored the Council of Ministers which by law was his advisers in the administration of the province. Mr. Huq made his charges in the Legislative Assembly of Bengal. They were grave charges. But the Governor did not feel the necessity to meet any of these; neither did the Linlithgow Government nor did the Secretary of State deem it proper for the good name of their administration, if not for any other higher consideration, to ask the Governor to refute these charges in as public a manner as these had been made. We remember to have heard Mr. Amery say that the Governor had submitted an explanation and he, the head of the Indian administration, was satisfied with it. It is useless to try to argue with such a complacent attitude. Mr. Huq further said that his Ministry had wanted to take a census of the amount of food in the Province with a view to undertake measures for relief if the census disclosed that food was dangerously in deficit. But the Governor would have none of this proposal. It is no credit to Mr. Amery and Lord Linlithgow that they allowed a Governor to be thus held before the world as a meddler who by meddling made things worse for the people under his charge. Even when the poor man has gone to settle accounts with his Maker, his earthly superiors have done nothing to justify his ways in handling a situation that threatened death and desolation to millions caught between war and starvation.

We do not know what the Central Government have placed before the Woodhead Commission in defence of the measures taken by them to halt the march of events that betokened widespread scarcity that may develop into famine. Experiences of previous famines, recorded in reports still available in the dove-cots of their Secretariats, ought to have told them that indications of such catastrophes should be carefully noted. Mr. Ghosh has quoted from the report of the Famine Commission of 1878-'79 indicating certain of the danger-signals of famine. One of these is the "wandering" of paupers from rural areas, and their flocking into towns or cities near-by. Mr. Caird asked Sir Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay, the question, and received the reply that throws light on this matter.

"Do you look upon wandering as a symptom of danger? Do you know whether it is possible to prevent it; if so, how?"

"Yes, certainly; perhaps the most imminent symptom of danger that can possibly appear in times of famine. It is always followed by mischief more or less grave; it is often the precursor of mortality; probably more mortality happens in this way than in any other with all classes (excepting *Sadhus*, habitual wanderers, etc.), the best prevention of wandering is the timely preparation of a frame-work of village relief If the prevention be early, prompt and efficient, the wandering will be stopped."

This "symptom of danger" appeared during the last months of 1942 in the streets of Calcutta, when hundreds and thousands of village folk from the suburban areas began to queue before shops that dealt with food grains. The majority of them were women who with their children kept nightly vigils, lying on the foot-paths for snatches of sleep that was possible, so that as soon as the shops were opened they could buy rice at the controlled price. These people underwent this trouble and torture because in their villages they could not get the rice at this price, or any rice at all. Mr. Fazlul Huq's Ministry did not either understand the significance of this phenomenon, or could not do anything owing to the obstructive tactics of the Governor and the bunch of officials who guided him. Public men and publicists in Bengal there were who had warned the Government and the people of the meaning of this "wandering". One of the most assiduous was the editor of the Bengali-language daily—*The Basumati* (the World)—who day in and day out quoted from reports of previous famines the signs and portents of famine as these had been recorded in Government reports. He showed how Lord Northbrook had fought a famine in the early seventies of the last century, and the arrangements made then had enabled the men in charge of famine relief to claim the credit that there had hardly been any death owing to scarcity of food. Work and relief had been organised in such a way that men and women were found occupation near their homes, and where relief was given, it was given in the homes of the people; they were not allowed to "wander" into towns and cities, leaving their homes uncared for. Warnings like these were unheeded. And during the last twelve months and more, public men and publicists have been searching for the reasons that had led the Government of Lord Linlithgow to ignore the lessons left by their predecessors in their campaigns during the "22" famines that had visited the country under British rule.

There was another danger signal that should have attracted the attention of the Bengal Government at least. We refer to the transfer of their holdings by agriculturists driven to this step by hunger. In the Bengal Legislative Assembly in reply to a question by Mr. Mirza Abdul Hafiz with regard to the number of registration of sales and mortgages of landed property in a single subdivision of the district of Mymensingh, the most populous district in the Province, the following figures were placed before the House on July 8, 1943 :

REGISTRATION OF SALE-DEEDS

November	1941	...	...	2,192
December	1942	...	...	1901
January	1943	...	...	2157
February	1943	...	...	726

MORTGAGES

1941	...	...	158
1942	...	...	451

In reply to a question put by Mr. Abdul Hamid a fuller statement was made as follows :

Nos. of transfer-deeds registered	Nos. relating to occupancy holdings	No. of occupancy holdings sold.	Amount received by the vendors.
1941 ... 855,758	744,854	634,113	8,42,79,051
1942 ... 964,596	849,636	762,346	10,19,09,026
1943 (up to January 31), 134,245	123,379	110,990	1,61,01,531

These figures ought to have told the Government that things were getting worse for the agriculturists who sell or mortgage their lands as the last resource of theirs to keep body and mind together. Sir John Herbert and his official advisers were busy with the war; they had no time to understand the significance of these sales; to them and the leaders of the warring nations civilian life was less valuable than that of an army mule, to paraphrase the elegant language of a Bengal magistrate quoted by Mr. Kshitish Chandra Neogy in the Central Assembly, to acquaint the higher bureaucracy of the mentality that a section of them has developed under the pressure of war. This member representing the worst-affected portion of Bengal, East Bengal proper, made graver charges against the supineness of the Linlithgow administration in course of the "food" debate in the November session of the Assembly.

These facts are uncontestable—the break-down of Bengal's economic arrangements in the latter months of 1942 and the earlier months of 1943, are implicit in the figures quoted above. We do not know why the highly organised bureaucracy would not understand these signs and premonitions of a calamity. We do not know why the ministry set up in Bengal with Sir Khawja Nazimuddin as Chief Minister failed to direct the attention of the permanent officials to the significance of the vast land transfers taking place. The majority of the agriculturists concerned with these transactions were Muslims whose guardian Sir Nazimuddin's party claims itself to be. His supporters among the Muslim members of the Bengal Legislature could not but have told him of the dangerous possibilities of the situation. He must have been aware of the differences of outlook and methods that have developed between the Governor and the Ministry of his predecessor in office. Knowing all these things the leader of the Muslim League party in Bengal accepted the commission from Sir John Herbert to aid and advise him in conducting the administration of the province, one of the pre-occupations of which would be the growing scarcity of food grains. And, as soon as he could manage to beat up an ill-assorted Ministry by the distribution of posts and patronage, he began to repeat the parrot-cry of the bureaucracy, central and provincial, that food grains in Bengal were not in deficit. His Civil Supplies Minister, Mr. Suhrawardy, was most vociferous in propagandising this brief. Why they did so, why they felt themselves burdened with the responsibility of upholding the bureaucratic story—the mystery of this loyalty has not been explained yet. This brief was prepared at the Central Secretariat and the Bengal bureaucracy and the Bengal Ministry were found accepting it as their own. The directives issued on the occasion of the Food Conference held at Delhi on May 8, 1943, by Major General Wood give us an inkling of the

mind of the Linlithgow administration. The most important of these are the following :

(1) The fact that there was a sufficiency of food for Bengal should be proved statistically and given the widest publicity by advertising and repeating *ad nauseum*.

(2) No price control in Bengal until Government acquire physical control of supplies of rice. Meanwhile, forget prices and concentrate on ensuring free flow of rice into the market and exercise restraining influence on prices through Government Agencies at regulated prices, the quota allotted to each commercial agent and the price at which he is permitted to buy from day to day being kept secret. Buy in the cheapest market and bring down your offer of prices by judiciously holding off the market when necessary.

Sir Nazimuddin and his principal colleagues—The Civil Supplies Minister and the Finance Minister—lent their voice in following the first directive, and when during subsequent sittings of the Bengal Legislature members called upon them to justify this propaganda, they could only escape by denying what they had said in the first flush of their elation in gaining the Ministry. It is profitless today to enter into argument with "terminological inexactitudes" which politicians have to utter to save their "face". The personal factors that have played a part in worsening conditions in Bengal during 1943 may not be known today. The Government has gagged the people, and has done their best and worst to hide the truth of the famine. If things were above board, if the mistake made had been honest, the Government need have no occasion to adopt the secrecy. Their apologists have said that the truth would have created "panic." They have not told us how and why the truth told outside India could create "panic" in Britain and U. S. A., and how that "panic" would have hampered war activities in those countries. We know that if the truth had been made known earlier, there was just a chance of help and relief coming from outside the country, as during previous famines. But in their wisdom the Government would not let the truth go out of India. They represented to the world that there was scarcity, but not conditions that would justify the use of the dread word—famine. Otherwise, on the occasion of the Food Conference of the "United Nations" held at Hot Springs in the U. S. A., the complacent mood could not have found expression and come to us through the air on May 29, 1943. "India's rice problem is being considered but experts here are of opinion that little can be done by this Conference or the Relief Conference, which...will be held shortly." In the last volume of the "Annual Register" we have quoted from the *Civil & Military Gazette* of Lahore comments criticising the hush-hush policy of the British Government in this matter. Since then we have come across comments in U. S. A. papers which raise the veil just a little. Elsie Weil writing in the New York monthly—*Asia & Americas* in its February (1944) issue, said :

".....Nothing about the famine was cabled to American newspapers last September when it had reached an acute stage in Bengal. Nothing trickled through to the American Press in October, either. If this seems strange, an announcement prominently displayed in the September 18, 1944, issue of the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*.....and reprinted from the *Civil & Military Gazette* of Lahore, offers an explanation...."

At last in November word of the famine began to come through. It was hardly possible to conceal a situation which had reached such tragic and devastating proportions that American Army men could see starving Indians, while families of them fall and die in the streets of Calcutta.

It is this lack of candour that will stand as the gravest charge against Lord Lidlithgow and Mr. Amery in their handling of a situation that had no political significance, that formed

**Bureaucratic
ignorance ?**

no part of the argument between India and Britain in the political arena. Why they should have adopted this tactics neither of these high dignitaries has cared to explain. It is this lack of candour that imparts meaning to the bitter words uttered in the Indian Legislature in its November (1943) session that the famine was "primarily a State Industry, and in certain of its aspects bore the hall-mark of genuine British manufacture". We have never been able to bring ourselves to subscribe to the idea that the men who were in charge of the administration of India in 1943 could have had any prevision of the consequences of the measures taken by them during the panic days of May-June of 1942 when Japanese hordes were marching to the eastern borders of India, and were poised for an attack on her which would carry everything before them as it had done through Malaya and Burma in our neighbourhood. The more probable cause of the outburst of this famine was the thoughtless policy adopted of removing food-grains from certain of the coastal areas of the province, disturbing the delicate balance of the food situation. The bureaucracy even when it had as at the Centre members of Indian birth to appear before to public as heads of particular departments, and in the provinces where "provincial autonomy" worked with Ministers said to be responsible to the Legislature and through it to the people—the bureaucracy did not know of this perilous balance in the food situation in Bengal. Since the beginning of the present century the province has been showing deficits in the production of food which ran up to the figure of 6 to 7 crore maunds of food-grains a year ; 2 to 3 crore of these were made up by imports from Burma ; the rest were supplied by the people going on short ration. In the last volume of the "Annual Register" we quoted the evidence of representative witnesses from different parts of the province led before the Paddy Enquiry Committee about ten years back to indicate the nature of this deficit. Into such a situation erupted war with all manner of disorganisation that is its companion. This disorganisation was exploited by the agents of the Government sent out to buy for it food for the army and the "essential services." We have traced the malign influence of these purchases in upsetting the arrangements by which the people of the province were fed without any guidance from the bureaucracy.

It could not be ignorant of this difficult position. But it did nothing during these years to retrieve the position, There were ministers who could be expected to understand the significance of the evidence recorded by this particular

**Maladjustment
in Indian society**

Committee. But they also did nothing. Why ? Why have they proved themselves to be incapable of understanding the factors that went to the feeding of their own

people ? There may be many reasons for their failure. One of the most significant of these was their education, the habits of life and thought that had made them foreigners in their own country, that have dis-associated them from their people, the vast majority of whom lived in the villages. Not one amongst these people staked their position in public life on solving this problem. They could find time in orating on the theme that the "nation lived in the cottage"; they could find time in inflaming communal feelings. But they had not the time or the inclination or the capacity to work up a programme that would produce more food-grains and see to their just distribution. We have a feeling that the class from which these ministers were recruited were all of them without distinction of caste or creed members of a separate nation, separate from the majority of their people. A hundred years ago Disraeli had indicated how there were "two nations" in Britain—the rich and the poor. Under the auspices of British rulers the same development has taken place in our country. The joint family system that provided for the widow and the orphan has broken down under the onslaught of the individualism taught by the example and practice of the rulers, and supported by a philosophy of conduct that was wholly alien to our own. It may be that individual human life in India has had a new flowering under the impulse of this new education. But the debit side of the account was startling. The first victims of this maladjustment are those who are left helpless by death or disease, or other stresses and strains of life. In the broader field of social life, in the economic activities of the people, British methods of administration, exploitation and enlightenment have thrown out of gear India's social and economic arrangements, thrown millions of men and women out of the employments that had fed them and earned them the comforts and conveniences of life. Famines like what devastated Bengal in 1943-'44 are a natural culmination of the process of disintegration—the process which no human skill or wisdom appears to be able to control.

With special reference to the famine that we have been discussing we hold the system introduced by Britain as responsible for

**Mr. Amery's
uncomfortable
position**

its ravages. In the last volume of the "Annual Register" we have tried to indicate the many factors that complicated matters. Even after twelve months of this catastrophe we cannot say that we have been able to get hold of these

as an explanation of the harrowing experiences through which our people have been passing. The Central Government at Delhi-Simla has by its complacency let the people down; the Provincial Government at Calcutta has been as effete. The two ministries in Bengal which were and are kept as show-windows by the bureaucracy, the Fazlul Huq Ministry giving place to the Nazimuddin Ministry at the dictation of the governor, the late Sir John Herbert, have only served the purpose of misleading the world with regard to the responsibility for the famine. The proof of this misrepresentation was evident in the ways in which the Government of Lord Linlithgow interfered with the transit of famine news out of this country. We have quoted above what a U. S. A. paper has said with regard to this technique of misrepresentation. The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Leopold Amery, has shown himself to be a specialist and an expert in this art. Since writing in the

last volume we have had opportunity of consulting the "Hansard" which publishes reports of the "debates" in the British Parliament. We learn many interesting things, Indian and foreign, through this consultation. On the 5th of August, 1943, Mr. Amery was asked :

"Is he aware that in Bengal thousands of people were coming in from the countryside and living off the garbage heaps of the City of Calcutta? Will he consider telling us what he is doing and what he plans?"

The Secretary of State for India replied :

"I shall be glad to give all the information to the House, but my hon. friend will remember that this matter in Bengal is primarily one for the Ministry of the self-governing Province."

If this is not a suggestion of untruth we do not know what Mr. Amery's words mean. By the time when he was uttering these words

he must have received report of the proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly in course of which the head of one such Ministry in Bengal, Mr. Fazlul

Huq, had told the story that such an innocent measure, and a necessary measure if a proper food plan was to be laid down for the province, as the census of food grains in the province, suggested by the Ministry, the "self-governing" limb of the Bengal Government—how this innocent suggestion was over-ruled by the governor in his discretion or individual responsibility or whatever jugglery of words may be used to indicate the powers and responsibilities of the governor of an Indian Province. We can go on quoting Mr. Amery in this game of misrepresentation. But, with quoting one other piece we will leave him. A question was put to him on 21 October, 1943 :

"Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries at once as to the possible spread of this disease (cholera) and also inquire of the Central Government whether medical supplies are required at the present time to supplement whatever supplies they have?"

Mr. Amery replied :

".....the information that I have is that there is no shortage of medical supplies and there is no widespread outbreak of disease....."

In course of reply to another question the Secretary of State for India had pointed out that there was the "Famine Code" as a guide to the officials to fight conditions of famine.

Did Government follow the "Famine Code"

If he had remembered this reply he could not have said in October (1943), that there was "no widespread outbreak of disease" in the province. When he spoke of the "Famine Code" he could not have forgotten what the Government of Lord Northbrook who had to fight a famine and pestilence, and fought it successfully, said in a Resolution dated Calcutta, November 7, 1873 :

"In as much as the prevalence of want may give rise to many forms of epidemic disease, the augmentating and the re-enforcing of the medical staff of all grades in the afflicted districts will be of primary importance."

His office which prepared Mr. Amery's reply did not know what a former governor of Bombay, Sir Bartle Frere, had said in his pamphlet—*On the impending Bengal Famine* (1874). We are enabled to quote this from Sri Hemendra Prasad Ghosh's book—*The Famine of 1770*.

"Men are death-stricken by famine long before they die. The effects of insufficient food long continued may shorten life after a period of some years, or it may be of some months or days. But invariably there is a point which is often reached long before death actually ensues, when not even the tenderest care and

most scientific nursing can restore a sufficiency of vital energy to enable the sufferer to regain even apparent temporary health and strength. Add to this the consequence of famine in death, fevers and epidemics of various kinds that are apt to be quite as fatal as the effects of the famine itself."

These quotations go to show how irresponsible Mr. Amery was even in October, 1943, when famine was claiming its victims by thousands every week. His irresponsibility comes glaringly into view by what Major-General Douglas Stuart, General Officer Commanding Troops in Bengal said in course of a broadcast on Army Medical Relief made on January 11, 1944.

"The quantities of quinine which had been distributed through the Government and Army agencies are now finding their way to the needy persons, but it is not yet available in sufficient quantities. I regret to say that there is still a large amount of illicit traffic, and in some of the out of the way villages, people are even paying as much as 4/- to a rupee per tablet... In other places we found that only two grains of quinine were being given instead of 5 with the result that the patients got no benefit. The remaining 3 grains presumably found their way to the Black Market."

In the last volume of the "Annual Register" we tried to trace the failure of the Delhi-Simla bureaucracy to anticipate the consequences of their own actions—boat removal and food denial in Bengal in 1942—and to take steps to forestal these. In the present volume we have tried to bring out how the London Government was both ignorant and adepts at misrepresentation. Mr. Amery's antics in this line must have consciously or unconsciously inspired the Calcutta Anglo-Indian daily to write : "No Government system which has travestied truth on economic subjects can reasonably expect to retain full confidence." We have now to turn to the Bengal Government and the Nazimuddin Ministry, and try to understand why they failed as ignominiously as their superiors at Delhi-Simla and London. There are secret chambers within secret chamber in which are locked up the rottenness of the system of administration under which we live. Only in times of crisis certain of the doors of these chambers burst, and we come face to face with the reality of incompetence enthroned in India as its Government. Even then the darkness is made visible only. We know how at the dictation of the Central Government the governor of Bengal carried out the boat removal and food denial policies against the advice of the Ministry. We did not know that this government had been warned by non-official Europeans that the war started by Japan would put "a strain upon the railways as would produce a large measure of trade stagnation and shortage of food". The government disregarded this warning. Mr. Noel Barwell who was one of the body of non-official Europeans who presented the memorandum writing to the columns of the Calcutta Anglo-Indian daily on September 9 (1943) gave his interpretation of events in Bengal. He charged that

"the Central and local Governments have between them (a) in large measure made famine conditions in E. India inevitable ; (b) created serious fuel shortage, the worst results of which may lie ahead of us ; (c) brought about the destruction of very large quantities of consumable goods which the railways have been incapable of moving".

This impeachment should have led to positive action for setting matters right on the part of the non-official Europeans who earn their livelihood in Bengal. Instead, they are found to be upholding an incompetent administration in the province. By this supineness of theirs they show themselves to be no better than helpless but anxious spectators of the disintegration of a system of life which was partly the product of their work. A leadership should have come from this community which would challenge the incompetence of Sir John Herbert and of the Ministries which proved themselves unequal to the occasion. We do not know why they failed to rise up to the situation. Their organs in the Press have on more occasions than one given expression to dissatisfaction at the way matters were being allowed to drift in Bengal. This expression was not followed by appropriate action. Why? It may be that this class felt themselves to be unable to do anything that would expose before the world the nature of efficiency that Britain has been able to propagandize over the world as its special contribution to the present order of things in India. It may be that they felt diffident in intruding into matters during a "total war" which "brass hats" and bureaucrats would sneer at as impertinence. It may be that they felt the debacle in Bengal's economic life as none of their concern, as it did not touch them in the every-day concerns of their life in this "land of regrets". Whatever be the true reason, there cannot be any manner of doubt that the Clive Street "Burra Sahibs" failed Bengal as the Government did. That our interpretation is not far wrong would be borne out by what is written by Horace Alexander of the influence of these people in his 'Penguin Special' pamphlet entitled—*India Since Cripps*.

"The European group, representing chiefly Scottish business interests in Calcutta, had a controlling influence in the Legislature, owing to the feud between the various Indian parties.....any Ministry that embarked on a policy strongly at variance with European business interests would probably soon go the way of Fazlul Huq and his colleagues."

The various parties that played their part in helping to precipitate famine conditions in Bengal, apart from the profiteers and exploiters of other people's difficulties, have been discussed

The I.C.S. at Writers' Building above, except one. This is the Nazimuddin Ministry that was put into office by a combination of the governor, the European group, and the Muslim League party. Mr. Alexander hinted that "perhaps" there were "some other powerful agencies" at work, without indicating who or what these were. "Perhaps" they belonged to the "I. C. S." element at Writers' Building, against whom members of the Fazlul Huq Ministry had been waging a consistent campaign, exposing their doings in letters addressed to the governor and the governor-general. These letters gave these high officials an idea of the hostility that is entertained against them. When Mr. Fazlul Huq agreed to an enquiry into the doings in Midnapur without consulting the governor, that must have been the last straw on the back of the camel, the last offence that could be tolerated in an Indian Minister. And we would not be surprised if ever the history of politics in Bengal in 1943 comes to be written, that in the story of the fall of the Fazlul Huq

Ministry, a place of honour would be given to this powerful body—members of the "Steel Frame" that upheld Britain's imperial sway over India. We will also know why they preferred the Ministry captained Sir Nazimuddin. Till then we will be groping through controversial literature and have to be satisfied with any crumbs of fact that may come in the way.

And this Ministry will live in the history of Bengal, in the memory of the people, as the one during whose regime there was a famine in which men, women and children died because

**The
Nazimuddin
Ministry**

food became unavailable, because it was selling at prices—rupees thirty to forty—which two crores of the people, one-third of the population, could not ever pay.

Of these two crores more than fifty lakhs must have died by the end of 1943. The horror of this development is tragic enough. But its enormity was intensified as we watched the Nazimuddin Ministry accepting their high commission with promises of relief to the people, trying to keep them alive by these promises, trying to put courage into them, and failing to fulfil these, failing to fight the forces of greed and corruption that were twisting life out of the millions of their fellow-countrymen. History, after the dust and heat of the present controversy will have subsided, after the bitterness of conflict for power and pelf has lost its venom, history will tell us why the Nazimuddin Ministry failed in its duty in one of the supreme crises in their Province's life. Till then we can only collect and keep in record the many influences, personal and impersonal, that beat down this Ministry, and disabled it in its frantic fight with famine. We are too near these events to properly judge the failures of the men in charge of high responsibilities. We can try to make a success of this quest for truth by putting promises and their fulfilment or unfulfilment side by side, and allow these to tell their story. The Ministry of Sir Nazimuddin would have to be judged by this standard. They cannot escape it. When they accepted office in the last week of April, 1943, they must have known what the position was, as less than five weeks back their party had drawn a lurid picture of the food situation in Bengal, using it as one of the weapons to discredit the Fazlul Huq Ministry. Their attack failed on that occasion. On the 28th of March, the governor by a clever use of his persuasive powers succeeded in getting from Mr. Fazlul Huq a letter of resignation; and the fall of his Ministry was consummated. For about three weeks and a little more Bengal lived under rule of the governor, unadvised and unassisted by a Council of Ministers. For reasons unexplained, the powers that be felt it uncomfortable that Bengal, the nearest base from which Burma could be invaded, should be ruled by a British governor without the aid and advice of a bunch of Indian Ministers. So came Sir Nazimuddin to be put into his position as "chief minister" in Bengal.

**What people
think of Sir
Nazimuddin**

What people thought of him and the party that he leads we will allow a non-Indian, Mr. Horace Alexander, to say,

"The honesty of the Prime Minister, Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, is generally recognized, but the Hindus look upon him as a tool in the hands of Mr. Jinnah,

and it is doubted whether he can stand up either to Mr. Jinnah or to some of the wealthy Moslem merchants, or—in case of differences of opinion—to the governor."

Sir Nazimuddin accepted office in the last week of April, and soon realized the nature of the task that faced him and his colleagues, the failure or success in tackling which will test their capacity as rulers who were to replace the British. On the 5th May, 1943, he is reported as saying :

"The food problem was of the utmost importance and their success would depend on their successfully solving the question of cheaper rice and cheaper 'atta' for the masses. Practically in the districts of Bengal rice was selling at prices between Rs. 35/- and Rs. 40/- a maund. Can you imagine what this means when you know the average income of a poor middle-class Bengalee family is Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- a month, and the labourer's income is Rs. 18/- per month? For these people to buy rice at such high prices is almost an impossible task. How they are living God alone knows."

As a realistic picture of the food situation of Bengal in the month of May, 1943, it could not be bettered. But Sir Nazimuddin's Ministry with all the good-will in the world could not improve matters, and the Chief Minister as a good man and Muslim, could but fall back on *kismet*, the will of God, as an explanation of the disaster that had overtaken his province during his regime. While making public declarations that things were improving, the Relief Organisation Officer of the Government of Bengal was found addressing District Officers and asking them to raise no hopes that could not be realized in practice. One such Circular, dated August 30, 1943, was quoted in the Bengal Assembly by Rai Harendra Nath Choudhury on September 20, in course of his speech on the motion by the Revenue Minister recommending rupees three crores fifty-two lakhs for expenditure under the head of—"Famine".

"In these circumstances it would be useless to put up fantastic schemes of relief grants in large quantities of foodgrains for sale at cheap rates. Relief and help must be restricted to the absolutely minimum number of persons and families, and the estimates of requirements drawn up accordingly."

This Circular appears to go against the spirit of the announcement made by the Finance Minister in Sir Nazimuddin's Ministry that half-measures were not being adopted, and that "no matter what the cost, Government must afford relief, for otherwise that may mean death by starvation." That Government measures for fighting famine were proving inadequate was acknowledged by Mr. Suhrawardy, the Civil Supplies Minister of Bengal, in reply to a question put him by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal: "I agree with Dr. Sanyal that rice is not available in all parts..." If one went through the volumes of the proceedings of the Bengal Legislature during the sessions held during the months of July, 1943 to the earlier months of 1944, acknowledgments such as these can be found in plenty. On the 11th of February he said :

"But I do recognize at the same time that there must be a large section of our people that are not able to buy foodgrains unless the prices fall to a very low level—to such a level as we cannot allow the prices to fall. For them something will have to be done, and we are considering the question of providing cheap grains for them as soon as the grains become available to us...."

Profession
& practice

Mr. Suhrawardy's
acknowledgment

This was said in the month when the bumper crop of *Aus* had been gathered about four months, and the *Aman* rice was more than half gathered. It was about this time that in certain districts of Bengal the price of rice registered a fall to Rs. 10/- per maund. Dinajpur in north Bengal is one of the surplus districts. Mr. Nisith Nath

**Government
Profiteering**

Kundu representing the general constituency of the district brought to the notice of the Assembly the downward trend of the prices of paddy and rice in its different markets. On the 1st of February paddy was sold at the Haripur market at a price between Rs. 4/8/- and Rs. 5/8/- and rice between Rs. 8/12/- and Rs. 10 per maund. On the 5th February at the Bindal *hat* paddy was sold at a price between Rs. 4/8/- and Rs. 5/8/- and rice at a price between Rs. 9/8/- to Rs. 10/8/-. In the Fakirganj *hat* on the 3rd February paddy sold at a price between Rs. 4/- and 5/- and rice at a price between Rs. 8/12/- and Rs. 9/8/-. On the 6th February at the Dinajpur town paddy was sold at Rs. 6/10/- and rice at Rs. 11/14/-. There were reports that the Government were making heavy purchases of rice and paddy taking advantage of this fall in the principal food grains of the province. And they have yet to explain why in "ration" areas people were made to pay almost double the price for their rice. This fact accords ill with the declaration of Bengal's Civil Supplies Minister that "there must be a large section of our people who are not able to buy food grains unless the prices fall to a very low level...." Was there profiteering in these Government transactions as there was in the sale of wheat and wheat products received from the Punjab? This suspicion was very strong in 1943, and during the various debates on food held in the Bengal Legislature and in the Central Legislature many things came out that added force to it.

In this connection certain facts brought out by Mr. Fazlul Huq in course of a discussion in the Bengal Assembly is very pertinent. He was Chief Minister in Bengal for about six years.

**Government agents
& price of rice**

And it may be expected that he would have personal experience of how things were managed in the procurement of food grains and the nature of profiteering that flourished under the nose of the Government, and with their connivance. In course of a speech made on the 27th September, 1943, in a heated speech, he narrated the story. He challenged the Government to hold an enquiry and he would be able to prove his charges. In the last volume of the "Annual Register", we have described the process by which the agents of the Government charged with the duty of removing the "denial rice" depressed the market by threats and cajolery used in the village markets. In this speech of Mr. Fazlul Huq we find support for this criticism of ours of the methods of purchase followed by the Government agents. Mr. Huq quoted two cases pending one before the High Court and the other before the civil court. We have to make a rather long extract to indicate the way how by "exercising the powers given under the Defence of India Rules, Government gets hold of stocks of rice in certain men's godowns and gives the same to the favourite agents."

"They (the Government agents) went to Khulna and told the people, 'let us have your rice; if you do not sell it to us you will not be able to sell it to any

body else'. The poor village people who were in want of money sold their rice at Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 per maund.....Stocks were requisitioned under Rule 75 (a) of the Defence of India Rules, but as soon as the stocks were requisitioned Government without caring to give the affected parties any compensation, handed over the stock to Mirza Ali Akbar. Here is one writ of Mandamus issued by the High Court in the matter of a man named Man Singh of 177 Harrison Road.....The order is dated 17th of June, 1943 purported to have been issued by Mr. B. K. Acharya, Joint Regional Controller of Civil Supplies, requisitioning 150 bags of rice belonging to that firm and he is purported to have acted under Rule 75 (a) of the Defence of India Rules. The said order does not state whether compensation has to be paid for such requisition. This is the manner in which requisitions are made by Government. Mirza Ali Akbar of 35 Ezra Street has been appointed the agent to remove rice unconditionally and when he gets rice he deals in it in any way he likes; he has purchased rice at Rs. 8/- (per maund) from the mulfusil and he has sold it to the Government at Rs. 32....."

These are very grave charges. The Civil Supplies Minister, Mr. Suhrawardy, did not make any attempt to meet these in course of his reply. This silence did not enhance the reputation of the Bengal Government for straight dealing in measures where money was concerned. The Ministers did not care, sure of their support of the European group, and what was of more importance of the permanent officialdom enthroned at Writers' Building at Calcutta.

The disclosures made by Mr. Fazlul Huq opened another vein of enquiry into the policies that influenced the Ministry of Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin in their handling of the food crisis. The way in which Sir John Herbert put this Ministry into the little power transferred under "Provincial Autonomy" was a great handicap to it. Its affiliation with the Muslim League, with the rank communalism preached by it, could not recommend it to the large body of liberty-loving people in the Province. It was feared that it would revive the communalism that during 1940 and '41 had disrupted Bengal's social and economic life. From this disgraceful state of things the province was saved by the Ministry under Mr. Fazlul Huq organized with the help and support of Mr. Sarat Chandra Basu. The Muslim League members of the Bengal Legislature became a little more careful in their activities, in their speeches which inflamed communal feelings in the Province. The leaders of the Muslim League, their position in the Ministry lost, curbed something of their powers of mischief. But their emissaries were abroad over the countryside, appealing to the fanaticism of the Muslim masses and organising this against the Ministry of Mr. Fazlul Huq. It would be blindness to deny that these had a powerful appeal to the Muslim masses before whose eyes were held up visions of a restoration of glory as in the days of the Pathans and Moghuls, when Muslim values, pure and undefiled, were thought to have ruled the life of the Muslims of India. The same response would have come from the Hindu masses if some one of the Nationalist leaders could have held before them the plan and programme for the restoration of the days of Mauryas or the Guptas. But to the leadership of the Muslim League these appeals had their uses as a political strategy. Behind those were power and pelf which the use of political power or the power of the State, even as subordinate members of the bureaucracy that upheld State authority, gave.

Muslim community & communal appeals

The present war had opened avenues of picking up money that were undreamt of. The leadership of the Muslim League recognised it as an opportunity that does not come very often, if ever, and it determined to exploit its full advantages. In public it maintained an attitude of dissatisfaction with British policy, both as it affected things Indian as well as things in other Muslim countries of Asia and Africa. It could not publicly support Britain's war effort, made declarations to this effect. But it advised its followers to make all the profits out of these war efforts. The Muslim community had fallen back in many of the professions and occupations that served the material interests of society. In agriculture, specially in Bengal, the members of the Muslim community held a dominant position. In trades and industries they were nowhere near the Hindus. The war and the famine in Bengal broke down all these, so far as these could be conducted under private initiative. The supply of food grains was a great business, employing lakhs of people and employing crores of rupees for their financing. In this trade members of the Muslim community had not been able to establish themselves. And when famine disrupted the normal channels of trade in food grains, and the State had to step in to arrange to supply these to the people, the Nazimuddin Ministry found in this catastrophe a great opportunity to establish members of the Muslim community in this trade. They on behalf of the State supplied the capital, and the State met the losses of the trade inevitable in its initial stages. This is the meaning and significance of all the controversy raised by the patronage extended by the Nazimuddin Ministry to the Ispahani Company both in their own name, and under the name of others. These transactions were going on all through the province and outside where Muslim agents were roaming the country to buy food grains for the Government of Bengal. And the most powerful instrument in the hands of the Ministry was that the Muslim community must have the same proportion in this trade as it had in the population of the Province.

This might entail disorganisation; this might delay relief to famine-stricken people. But the Civil Supplies Ministry insisted upon this as a condition precedent to the granting of agencies or contracts to those who did not belong to their faith. In a section of the Bengalee-language Press it was published that one of the Chief Agents for the procurement of rice was taken to task by the Civil Supplies Minister himself for failing to maintain the "communal ratio" in the appointment of their sub-agents or of their subordinate officers concerned with the purchase of food grains. This Chief Agent, one of the premier merchants of the province of Bengal, somehow felt this interference as an impertinence, and resigned his agency, not after he had written to Mr. Casey, the new governor of the province, of the circumstances under which he had been driven to resign a commission which was both a public duty and a profitable business. It appears that the governor has not been able to mend matters. Perhaps, he felt himself constitutionally incompetent to interfere in matters that

tell within the competence of the "self-governing" part of the Bengal administration. Under pressure of Muslim dissatisfaction with their share of posts and preferments under the Government, the Fazlul Ministry No. I. had been led to fix a "communal ratio" in these. The credit or discredit of the Nazimuddin Ministry was that it extended its use in a sphere which but for the war and the famine would not have come within the radius of its jurisdiction.

There is nothing inherently wrong in a Ministry using its patronage for the advancement of its party interests. The "spoils system"

**Muslim
separatism—its
birth**

is no new invention; people and countries whom we have taken as our examplers are quite familiar with it. And they do not appear to lose anything in world estimation for the pursuit of a system of graft that

has become quite respectable today. What is special and particular in Bengal, in India, is that the party membership is confined to members of a particular religious persuasion without reference to ideas and practices that are of this earth, earthy. We know that this is all a pretence—this attempt to boost a party for its belief in certain matters which in the ultimate analysis have nothing to do with mundane affairs of political power and economic grab. This pretence, however, has a great appeal to men and women even in the present rationalistic age. In India the leadership of the Muslim community ever since the country came under British rule has refused to merge its interests and sentiments, its ideas and ideals of social good, with the interests and sentiments, the ideas and ideals of the whole country. For years it nursed its particular dreams, standing separate from the dreams for the freedom and happiness of other sections of the Indian population who constitute the composite life of the country. This feeling of separateness is the seed-plot of the conflict that has been given a new shape by the All-India Muslim League, or to put it in another way and, perhaps, the right way, that has made the organisation an instrument for the realization of its particularist ambitions, for the satisfaction of its particularist conceits.

To revert to the technique employed by the Nazimuddin Ministry to fight the famine in Bengal. We have drawn attention to the

**Fighting famine
combined with
establishing Mus-
lims in trade**

difficulty it created for itself by trying to serve two purposes—to fight the famine and at the same time to establish members of the Muslim community in certain of the trades and professions in which they

were not represented in as great strength as its proportion in the population figures called for. From a study of the relevant papers, certain of which must have been presented to the Woodhead Famine Enquiry Commission, we are led to believe that the Ministry failed to secure the first object. As for the second, establishing members of the Muslim community, only those that followed the Muslim League policy and programme—this can be proved by the new purchases of the Calcutta Improvement Trust lands made by members of the community in an increasing number, and such other transactions. In this they have been following the example of their Hindu neighbours whom the lure of service under Government, and the professions and occupations that have grown under its auspices,

have drawn away from their village homes, disrupting the rural life of the country. We have heard Muslim League politicians deploring the fact that the Muslim community lacked a middle class which under modern conditions is the spearhead of all revolutionary and progressive movements in the world. We have been taught that this development is a necessary process in the evolution of a modern society in this land of ancient dreams and old-fashioned ideas. It may quite be so; it may be growing out of the "feudal" economy which Europe is said to have outgrown by the middle of the 17th century. It may be difficult today to indicate the consequences of this new class formation in the heart of the Muslim community. But one thing can be said with a certain amount of assurance that the new middle class in Muslim society will not find it easy, after the first flush of prosperity has subsided, to return to the heart of the nation which dwells in the villages. They will find themselves when the real test comes to be as rootless in their own country as the middle class of the Hindu community does today. There is a cruel logic in historic developments which not all the knowledge gathered by men in course of the millenniums of their history has been able to control or modify. Perhaps, these successes and failures are the notes which make the rhythm of human history. With the Sufi poet-philosopher we can only say—the moving hand writes, and having writ moves on.

This analysis of the many factors that stood in the way of the Nazimuddin Ministry making a success of their task of fighting the famine and pestilence during the last eight months of 1943 and the early months of 1944, brings us to the cruel fact that the Ministry sacrificed many lakhs of people among whom must have been lakhs of their own religious persuasion at the altar of participation in the contracts and agencies of which the monopoly was held by the Government. The governor and the bureaucracy might have been anxious to pull out the people from the agony into which they had been thrust by the system of administration existing in the country, by the ignorance and incompetence of the Central bureaucracy headed by Lord Linlithgow. It has not been yet explained why Lord Linlithgow did not feel called upon to take charge of this dangerous situation deepening into a crisis, and why the poor Nazimuddin Ministry was allowed to muddle the arrangements made for meeting it. It is too difficult for us to think that he and his advisers were so simple-minded as to believe that the jumble of truths and half-truths that Mr. Amery was advised to laddle out as the true explanation of the cause or causes of the famine would be acceptable to any intelligent man in any part of the world. One reason of Lord Linlithgow's obstinate refusal to visit Bengal may be the natural pricks of conscience roused at long last to the stupidity of the many measures taken under the advice or pressure of the military during the panic days that followed the fall of Rangoon, disturbing and disrupting the whole economic system of Bengal. These measures could have been taken only under the feeling that Bengal was as good as lost, and in this contingency it was not incumbent on the Govern-

ment to make things easy for the people of a probable "enemy country," a country that would be passing under enemy control. And as the "scorched earth" policy was the fashionable thing to adopt and follow, the Government to prove its capacity to adopt and practise up-to-date ideas and practices, did initiate these destructive and disruptive measures. But when Japan could not make good her threat to the province, and its people remained a charge to be carried, the mischief had passed beyond control. And, as no human Government during the long course of history, has been found to publicly acknowledge its mistakes, the Linlithgow Government was in very good company in trying to convince the world that the famine in Bengal was an "act of God", and this blasphemy being too much even for the sceptical modern world, the blame of the whole thing was passed on Nature, on the Indian agriculturist, on the hoarder, on the profiteer, and ultimately on the war that is being fought to free men and women from want. So, Lord Linlithgow's Government could plead *alibi*, and leave to his successor to find out a better reason.

But before passing on this responsibility to Lord Wavell, one thing was done—the appointment of a whole-time Food Member in

**Food Members &
their susceptibility
to official brief**

the Governor-General's Executive Council. We have seen in the previous volume of the "Annual Register" that the two members who preceded Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava in charge of this department—Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker and Sir Muhammed Azizul Huq—had consented to give voice to the official brief without at any time showing that they had any ideas of their own to fight the scarcity in food that threatened to develop into a famine. In the case of the latter, his hands were tied by his political affiliations with the people who manned the Nazimuddin Ministry. It was quite natural that he should turn the blind eye on the antics of this Ministry. The former—Mr. Sarker—had no such handicaps. A successful man in the line which had called him to its service in his youth, he, an Insurance magnate, was quite free in his political affiliations. He has a reputation as a student and observer of things, economic and financial. And when it was announced that he had been put in charge of the Food department in the Government of India, much, that much that was possible under the dispensation enthroned at Delhi-Simla, was expected of him. But the pronouncements that he made in course of food debates during the early months of 1943, and on other occasions, showed that his study of Indian economic and financial subjects had not been able to save him from the fatal spell of redtape, of the official brief. Even before this time when he was in charge of another Department, he appeared to have fallen victim to it. In May, 1942, he made a statement which showed the trend of his thought. In course of a speech made on the occasion of a "Grow More Food" function, he said :

Coming now to the position of Bengal in respect of the principal food products, you are no doubt aware that Bengal is normally a deficit province. As regards the most important food grains of the province, namely rice, the annual deficit which has to be made up by import from outside in normal times was about 61,000 tons, i.e., about 19½ lakh maunds. Compared to Bengal's total product-

lon of rice which is fairly about the level of 80 lakh tons, this deficit would appear inconsiderable... In respect of the most important foodgrain of the province, i.e., rice, the position of Bengal in the present year is much stronger than it has ever been in the recent past. Normally the cultivation of rice extends over 2 crores 10 lakhs of acres which is the actual average for the period 1927-'28 to 1936-'37. In 1941-'42, however, it was up to about 2 crores 35 lakh acres, as a result of the Government of Bengal's decision to restrict the production of jute. This increased acreage in 1941-'42 gave a surplus yield of 13½ lakh tons, i.e., about 3 crores 54 lakh maunds of rice. If this rate of production could be maintained, the monsoon permitting, not only would Bengal be self-sufficient in respect of rice, but she would also be in a position to give some help in meeting the deficiency which sister provinces would experience owing to the cessation of import from Burma."

We have tried to show with what little wisdom was Bengal governed during 1942 and 1943 to have driven its people to starvation and death from starvation, and the pestilence that accompanies and follows famines. We have shown how Indian public men, sane and sober, who co-operated with the bureaucracy in carrying on the administration on terms dictated to by the bureaucracy, were misled into complacency. For about 40 years the province has been deficit in the production of its foodgrains; one-third of the population by living on short ration from day to day, from year's end to year's end, allowed a semblance of sufficiency to mislead our students of economics or affairs. And the few that tried to point out to the danger signal of this malnutrition were not heeded to or were treated as cranks. With such inefficiency in the administration, and with such leadership thrown up by the people, the wonder should be that famine came upon us in 1943, and not twenty-five years earlier when another world war had disrupted the world's economy. It may be that on the former occasion the war did not come near India, that Japan did not feel herself strong enough to start on her imperialist adventure, of establishing the "Imperial Way" over east Asia as a stepping-stone to world domination. In the month of July, 1943, the forces of Japan invaded France's empire on the Pacific. Britain and the United States "frozen" her assets as reprisal for this attempt to disturb the peace of Asia. From that time Japanese commercial houses in India had begun to wind up their business; and news came that there were huge purchases by Japan of paddy and rice from Burma, sending up the prices of these grains. A wide awake administration would have taken note of these intimations of the coming storm. Without making a public display of their wakefulness, they could have taken steps to halt the march of certain of the evils that would follow an attack by Japan. Even when Japan reached the frontiers of India by the month of May, 1942, within six months of the start of her war, the Government of Lord Linlithgow could not think that the economic arrangements in eastern India would break down under the impact of this attack. Rather, they took steps that made sure that these arrangements should break down. Mr. Barwell's letter has been quoted from to show that the Government had fair warnings from their own countrymen of these developments. But they did not care. A Ministry that had the support of the vast majority of the people of Bengal was driven from office, because the bureaucracy somehow felt that it could not be trusted even with the little power entrusted to representatives of the people. An important

member of the Muslim League, Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, tried to rub in this fact into the faces of Mr. Fazlul Huq and the party that supported him. The Ministry was "suspect", said he. Why, he did not explain. But people understood the allusion. Because it had been formed with the help of Mr. Sarat Chandra Basu, elder brother of Subhas Chandra Basu. And the bureaucracy felt that this Ministry could not be tolerated.

"Being suspect, naturally they (the Fazlul Huq Ministry) did not get that support which they expected, because getting such support and then not doing the thing would have worsened the position."

We do not know what the bureaucracy expected of the people of Bengal. Their policy had kept the province militarily unorganized.

Even the defeats suffered in Malaya and Burma did not teach them to retrace this policy, to make an attempt to give training to the people that would enable them to fight for the defence of their homes.

Perhaps, they thought that putting arms into the hands of the people would endanger their irresponsible authority over the life of the country. Mr. Siddiqi's words suggest some such apprehension, that the Fazlul Huq Ministry having at its back the organised physical force of the province may strike on their own account. If Mr. Siddiqi's interpretation be right, the bureaucracy could not have done otherwise. And all the consequences that followed from this mutual suspicion find their place in an ordered process. Repression, starvation, death due to starvation—all these were inevitable. And State policy must bear its share of responsibility for this debacle.

Thus did politics play its part in bringing famine to the homes of Bengal. Death due to famine and pestilence has not yet been recorded in a census. The government in the province must have submitted to the Famine Commission their estimate of the number of men, women and children that had died owing to these causes. We have seen an estimate made by the Anthropology Department of the University of Calcutta. It was made public sometime in February, 1944. They took a "sample survey" of ten of the famine-affected districts of Bengal. This survey covered 816 family units with a total membership of 3,880. The total deaths in these groups have been 10 per cent during the last six months of 1944, the last six months or a little more. We have seen another estimate of the death that has removed about one-third of the population of a single sub-section of the Hindu community of the province, one of the most virile of the "scheduled classes"—a class that has supplied one or two Ministers since 1935. We refer to the Namsudras. The special correspondent of the *Bombay Times of India* writing on November 16, 1943, said :—

One class of labourers, the Namsudras, alone numbers 30,00,000 in Bengal, and it is not impossible that a third of these have died."

The story of the maladjustment of the food situation in Bengal appears to have had no *finis* written to it. Like poison in the blood it erupts into many places of the body politic. We have discussed how the food situation was made worse by the policy followed by the Ministry in its determination to put members of

the Muslim community into the distributing trades of the province, using the powers given them for fighting the famine to compel the observance of the "communal ratio" in trades and contracts. This opened out doors for misuse of these powers, and for the eruption of corruption which the new governor of Bengal felt compelled to notice in a broadcast. Another symptom of the disease was found in the food grains supplied in "ration shops," full of stones, of creeping and dead insects, the grains rotten by exposure to rain and sun. The food grains for the Calcutta area was supplied by the Central Government; the Government of Bengal was in this case mere distributors. The former insist that their business ended as soon as they reached the food grains to the care of the officials of the latter whose business it was to see or test otherwise the nature and quality of these. So, even after twelve months, it is yet a debatable question between the two Governments—who was responsible for mixing stones in the food grains, and under whose care food grains could develop in them fungus and insects? The story of the Botanical Garden Food has by now become world famous or notorious. The members of the Woodhead Commission, some of them at least with the Chairman, had the privilege of watching the hills of food grains stacked in the Garden, and the care that was taken of them. Almost at the same time lorries were seen hurrying away with these food grains and release them somewhere in Howrah to fill up holes and hollows in Municipal lands. A significant fact should be noted in this connection that the chairman of the Howrah Municipality happened to be a member of the Nazimuddin Ministry. All over the province sights like what was noticed at the Botanical Garden affronted the least observant of men and women, giving birth to many to a ribaldry which the future literary collector will find pleasure in. Meanwhile, men and women and children were made to feel that as they had consented to be reduced to beggary, they could not be choosers of the amount and quality of food that the great *Sarkar Bahadur* could dole out to them. This food might introduce into their bodies germs of disease. But there was the department of Health in charge of Mr. Jalaluddin Ahmed to fight the attacks of disease. The success of the fight was brought out in reply to a question about the rate of malaria mortality in Bengal during the first four months of 1944. Government statisticians beginning with village *Chowkidar*, the symbol of law and order in the rural areas of the country, could report the death of about two hundred thousand (2 lakhs) of people. The men, women and children that have died before their time by feeding on diseased food grains, cannot be recalled to life. And it is useless today to continue controversy over the responsibility for the outbreak of diseases in Bengal. Our people have a higher philosophy in dealing with breakdowns of civilized life like what we have passed through during the last 26 months and more. They are convinced that God was in the disease and in the healing, and in the death. They have a homely way of expressing this thought. As the serpent He bites; as the *Ojah*, the healer of serpent bite, He heals. It would be for the Government of Bengal and the Ministry to choose the cap that would fit them.

It is not yet time to take a census of the people that have died, class by class, employment by employment. The Namasudras who have drawn attention were not only labourers, but they were agriculturists also. Another class that has as grievously been affected were the fishermen whom the "boat removal" policy had already robbed of the means of their livelihood. The potters were another class of village artisans whose economic life had been rudely shaken by enamel and aluminium things. One-tenth of the population were landless labourers; many of these had been absorbed by the many employments opened by war activities, the building of air fields, the laying out of new roads or the improvement of old roads making them fitter for the heavy war lorries, the building of camps spread all over the province to accommodate the innumerable personnel of the many departments called into being by the war. But the majority of these people have had their "home-keeping" instincts more developed than in other sections; and except the more youthful amongst them, very few could be persuaded to leave their localities in search of these employments. It is these people and their dependents that were the first victims of the scarcity, finding in their ill-nourished bodies the easiest points of attack. Years and decades of malnutrition made members of this class victims of the least little disturbance to the balance in the province's economic life.

The bureaucracy knew of this dangerous state of things. But they could do nothing, because there was not money enough in the treasury. The war has proved how this talk was a pretence, if not worse. Bernard Shaw during the last world war had posed the question—how does it become possible to find the money for waging it in powder and shot, millions and hundred and thousand millions of it? During twenty-five years of an uneasy peace the world could not find time to reply to this question. During the present war, during the five years of it, more money has been burnt. And leaders of thought have been telling us that the leaders of States will find it difficult to find a satisfactory reply to this question at the end of the present war. They have been telling us that a return to the unemployment of the early thirties would compel people to believe that wars are a better work-getter than all the arts of peace; and if leaders of States cannot make a better use of peace, then it is preferable that wars should become a permanent feature of our social life.

In our own country dangerous thoughts like these may not influence conduct either of individuals or groups who can mould the habits and thoughts of their neighbours. But famine has been to us as destructive of human wealth, of the human capacity to make wealth, as any wars can be. Our people have died, but their death has not enriched life, physically or spiritually; they have died quietly. And the world has looked on this resignation with a pity that is akin to contempt. For the world cannot understand this acceptance of death with so little noise. Rabindra Nath Tagore has des-

cribed the life of the men and women who accept death with such resignation.

".....There they stand, heads bowed,
Mute ; on their pale faces chronicled the sufferings
Of many centuries ; on their shoulders they bear burdens
Which grow, carrying on, slowly, till life holds,
And then they pass them to the children for generations.
Fate they do not curse, nor complain, remembering the gods ;
Men they do not blame, nor cherish any pity of love
For themselves ; only a few grains of food they glean,
And their tormented lives, somehow, keep alive,
When even that meagre food some one robs,
And hurts their life in blind might's cruel oppression,
They know not to whose door they will turn for justice ;
Calling on the God of the Poor, for once in their heaving sighs,
Silently they die."—(Translated by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty).

This spirit of resignation must be the product of a social experience. Those who desire to pull out the people of this country from their slough of despondence should make their first attempt to understand it. We have quoted from Sir William Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal* the reasons why the Court of Directors could not understand the "quiet" that prevailed in Bengal during the 1770 famine. They could not believe that men and women could die so quietly, and that in their millions. There has not been much of a change during the last 175 years in the people of India. And the present generation of British rulers must have felt as their predecessors had done when men and women and children could be dying in the streets of Calcutta without cursing any body. We have heard American soldiers saying that they could not understand the quiet that prevailed amidst scenes of desolation and death. Men and women in India who try to interpret the life and thought of their people to the world outside have to find answers to questionings like these. Their quest for the key to this mystery will enable them to more successfully work out the programmes of relief and reconstruction that they have been trying to work out to make their people conscious of the value of human life, to rid them of the non-human acceptance of defeat in the struggle for existence.

Critics of Indian civilization have told us that religious beliefs and practices have been responsible for the evolution of this characteristic. Our predecessors had met these attacks in their own way. The present generation will have to find their own weapons to meet this criticism. It may be that a certain section of them would prefer to throw overboard all that make for weakness or instability in social life. It may be that Indian values that could not help people to preserve their political independence, to retain the self-respect of their national life—these do not deserve to live, to influence the life of the millions who constitute the nation in India. These are controversial subjects. And the majority of the men and women whom scenes of death and desolation have roused from their placid life may feel that these subjects may wait, but relief and rehabilitation of the shattered life of their people cannot wait. One can detect in them a sense of urgency, a tenseness of conduct that raise hopes of a more active genera-

tion of social workers, more in touch with the cruelty of existence, more conscious of the injustices of social arrangements that call for a radical programme of work.

But the famine has not allowed them to think out or work out these radical activities. They have been compelled to act and work within the context of the present order of things. Relief of the stricken, some little solace to men and women gasping for their last breath, is the one step now. The majority of these gently-nurtured people have never had any experience of death under such cruel circumstances. This experience is not easy to stand with ordinary human nerves. The young men and women who have been attracted to the work initiated by relief organisations or have themselves organised relief organisations, those of them who will be able to see the work through, they will have gained a new character and a new strength that will ultimately contribute to the building up of new character and new strength in their people. It is not to a mission of mercy that they were directing their energies. They had a social purpose that embraced all phases of life, that hoped to enrich these with new meanings. This mission of mercy is nothing new in Bengal's recent history. Inspired by the life and ideals of Swami Vivekananda, young Bengal had on every occasion when an act of God had devastated the country's material life run with help to the relief of the afflicted and the needy. On occasions when men and women congregated in places called thereto by religious impulses and sentiments, young Bengal had organised service to them in many forms. Behind these activities was the larger vision of influencing the masses to think of their common motherland, of the shame and degradation of her political subjection, to imbibe inspiration from the few days passed in common for service to their common people.

We still remember the shock of surprise that passed through the congregation of our common people when during the Swadeshi days that synchronized with the agitation against the attempt at the partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon, so unused were they to have "gentlemen's sons" serve them, as they did during the "Ardhadoya Day" of 1908, in the early months of that year. With traditions like these, it was easy for Bengalee young men and women to throw themselves into this mission of mercy. A Bengalee poetess, Mrs. Nirupama Devi, who has been conducting a relief and rehabilitation organisation about thirty miles south of Calcutta, gives voice to the pain and anguish of these days of 1943, and of the inspiration that had brought them to this work.

How famine
perverts human
nature

"Humans die of hunger,
There is none to sorrow for them.
Except death there's no other to which they can look forward to ;
These are the men and women
Who have no time to sorrow for their children who died untimely
But must the next moment start roaming from door to door,
Driven by hunger, driven unsatisfied,
For, none is there to give them food.

.....
Quarrel for a morsel of food, fight to divide it,
Kick and beat (one another) for a morsel of food,

Conduct themselves as beasts do,
 Parents strangle their children (driven by hunger)
 Shame has lost all meaning for them,
 Hunger as wide as the world,
 Meanness as low :
 Stricken by living death,
 Alas ! My Bharata, more dead than alive."

It was this consciousness of the shame and degradation of the country, represented by the helpless famine-stricken people, and the failure of the country to take care of them, to feed and clothe them, that was the driving force of the many activities undertaken by men and women of Indian birth for the relief of their people. These feelings found voice in the poem of Mrs. Nirupama Devi. She was in charge of the relief work started by the Brahmo Samaj. This society of Hindus had parted from their parent stock for reviving the ideals and practices free from idolatry, and ridding it of the other crudities and absurdities like the caste system and untouchability, the interdict on sea voyage, on widow remarriage, that had crept into it and disabled it for purposes of self-defence against rival or competing societies. Raja Ram Mohun Roy was the founder of this brotherhood. Since those days, during the more than one hundred years of its existence, the Brahmo Samaj has ever been foremost in running to the help of men and women who had been afflicted by floods or famines, and other causes. It was the pioneer of modern social service activities in the country. Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, father of Rabindra Nath Tagore, and Keshab Chandra Sen were elders of the Samaj when these activities took a regular shape and form during the sixties of the last century. The Ram Krishna Mission under the inspired guidance of its founder, Swami Vivekananda, has imparted a new impetus to serving God by serving his created beings. The Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, has ever been in the forefront of activities of relief called forth by the breakdown of normal social life under the impact of natural calamities or social upheavals caused by human wickedness. The Servant of India Society of Poona, founded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, followed these noble traditions. During the 1943-44 famine in Bengal these organisations took their natural place in relief activities. Other organisations grew up in response to demands for the better organisation of relief. Of these the place of honour should go to the Bengal Relief Committee, organized and conducted by merchants and traders of non-Bengalee origin who have made Bengal their second home. The President of the Committee was Sir Badridas Goenka, its secretary and treasurer was Sri Bhagirath Kanoria ; the majority of the managing committee came from this class. The Committee received a quick response from the country. It received more than twenty-seven and half lakhs of rupees in cash ; and food-grains, clothes etc. valued at rupees ten lakhs.

The other organisation that stepped into the breach was the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha. Dr. Syamprasad Mukherjee was the guiding spirit of this relief work. He it was whose voice rang throughout the country calling attention to the conditions of famine that threatened to decimate Bengal. For reasons yet unexplained the

Communalism in
 famine relief

Government did not favour this broad-casting of famine news either in India or outside. The Defence of India Rules were handy in gagging the expression of public feeling in this matter. And it required no little courage to defy this unwritten interdict. And when the history of this peculiar reluctance of the Government came to be written the credit of weakening its rigours will go to Dr. Mukherjee. It is a misfortune that relief activities had to be organised on a communal basis in Bengal during this crisis in her life. The fact that this had to be done reflected no credit on the people or on the Government or on the Ministry. It showed that there was something unhealthy in the atmosphere of the country. The majority of the relief organisations have offered help ignoring credal differences. For, it is difficult to conceive of human nature being able to refuse food to people simply because they differed from the giver of help in respect of belief in certain ultimate problems of approach to God or the Creator. But in Bengal in the year 1943 the Muslim League Ministry found it difficult to control the temptation of their followers in their declarations that they will have a big say in the distribution of relief, and the Muslims need not feel anxiety with regard to the conditions of destitution that had invaded their homes. This assurance must explain why Muslim initiative for organisation for the relief of famine did not come out as prominently as that supplied by other communities. The unfortunate effect of reserving amounts of help to Muslims made in one or two statements of Mr. Jinnah, the permanent president of the All-India Muslim League, was seen in the organisation of relief on communal lines. The bitterness of feeling roused by instances of communal discrimination that characterized certain activities of the Ministry in Bengal and its supporters was reflected in relief organisations. It would be recognising the presence of a poison in our social system to take note of this fact. We have seen statements submitted to the Famine Enquiry Commission wherein instances of communal discrimination in the matter of relief have been cited. It is difficult to judge in matters like these. But the fact that such grievances could be given expression to is symptomatic of a disease in the body politic.

And against the background of such a disruption of natural human relationships, the relief organisations had to carry on their work.

**The women's
organisations**

Only men and women who were actually in charge of the operations could explain the difficulties of such a state of feeling, of suspicion and irritation. They could only tell us how such feelings placed handicaps in their way, in carrying relief to people, in creating trust among those whom Government incompetence and the greed of traders and manufacturers had thrown on the roadside as objects of pity. The majority of the men and women receiving doles were householders in a small way, possessed of a strong sense of self-respect in the little concerns of their life. It was not an easy job to make these men and women accept charity and not feel humiliated in the process. It was no easy task to create hopes in hearts from where all hopes appeared to have departed, to put courage and self-respect in them. We can only hope that the men and women who had launched the relief operations had been able to approach their unfortunate neighbours

not as benefactors but as partners in a great work of repentance on the part of society for having failed to do its duty by them, for having allowed things to happen that disrupted the peace and the poor little arrangements of their home-keeping existence. The women's organisations that grew up in different parts of the province in response to the situation where women were the worst sufferers, could bring the touch of nature that made the whole world kin. The All-India Women's Conference, guided by Mrs. Vijoy Luxmi Pundit, and the Mahila Atmaraksha Samiti, the Women's Self-Protection League, were the most vivid expressions of this concern. The organisers of the Samiti soon realised that "everything which they (women) held dear—their homes, their children, their families had begun to disintegrate", to quote words from a report issued in the third week of December, 1943. As the crisis deepened this realisation forced itself into the consciousness of increasing numbers of women in what is called the "middle class". And a net-work of women's organisations grew up all over the province.

Immensity of the disaster	A Government of Bengal publication entitled— <i>Famine & the Government</i> —indicated for us the immensity of the crisis in the following words :—
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Of the 91 sub-divisions in the province 29 subdivisions with an area of 21,665 square miles and a population of 29.9 millions were most severely affected by the distress. Seven other subdivisions with an area of 7,264 square miles and a population of 4.5 millions were badly affected, while 18 other subdivisions with 13,193 square miles in area and a population of 12 millions were affected to some extent. The remaining 37 subdivisions with an area of 35,701 square miles and a population of about 21 millions were hit by high prices only and not by real scarcity, as these were more or less self-supporting or surplus areas.

State & other relief compared to private charity	<p>Faced by a situation of irretrievable disaster these non-official organisations could but do little. The whole of the collections made by them could not be more than a crore of rupees, as their published reports show. The Government in Bengal did spend rupees ten crores, a little over eight crores as the pamphlet quoted from, shows. A little over four crores were spent in gratuitous relief; about one and half crores of rupees in test relief work; about three crores in agricultural and land improvement loans. This money was spent during 1942-43 and 1943-44. Four crores of people, two-thirds of the population of the province, were affected by conditions of famine. And ten crores of rupees, a hundred million of rupees spent by the State, cannot be regarded as too generous for the needs of the situation. These eleven crores spent by the State and the non-official organisations could not have saved the four crores of men, women and children who had been pushed into famine. We will never know the amount spent by private charity in helping the distressed and the dispossessed. They must have been many times what was spent by the State and the relief organisations. It is this charity that is the core of all relief measures in all countries when "acts of God" or acts of Nature or acts of men, upset society's arrangements for feeding and clothing its members. The record of this charity is not found in any book written by man. The givers of this charity are content with the feeling that in the</p>
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Book of Fate this good work is related in characters not of human make.

The six millions of men and women who have fallen victims to famine and pestilence accompanying famine cannot return thanks for what was done to keep them alive. The others who **Help came from far & near** have come out of the cruel test with bodies wrecked and minds weakened, cannot express what they feel with regard to their benefactors. The majority of them cannot understand why they should have been thrown on public charity. On their behalf the awakened section of the Bengalee people, 10 or 12 per cent of the whole population, can express gratefulness that cannot find adequate language to express it. From far and near this help came. The Arya Samaj from the Punjab came with experience and organisation that had fought famine and pestilence in many an area in India during the seventy-five years of its existence. The Servant of India Society came from Poona with identical experience and organisation to succour the people in rural Bengal. The Marwari Relief Society of Calcutta, generous and active in relief activities wherever distress called for them, directed its experience to this work long before the Government had awakened to its responsibilities in the matter. The South Indian Evacuee Relief joined forces with the Navabidhan Relief Mission to form the Calcutta Relief Committee to take part in the fight against famine. The Muslim Chamber of Commerce organised and controlled by non-Bengalee Muslims doing business in Bengal with its headquarters at Calcutta had its relief work for separately looking after the distressed amongst their community. The Communist party of India have made their peace with the Government and was busy organizing relief Committees, sponsored by the Government. The Friends' Ambulance Unit, organised by the Quakers of Britain, whose leader, Mr. Horace Alexander, had for years been a friend of Mahatma Gandhi sharing his beliefs and sympathising with his activities for India's fight for freedom, established a net-work of relief centres that took the members to the most unapproachable parts of the province. The value of help that they rendered to Bengal, it is not for us to evaluate in words. In silent gratefulness the Indian publicist records the fact that such help came from a section of the people in whose name and on whose behalf the ruling classes of their country profess to hold political power over forty crores of men, women and children. The living experiences of the members of the Friends' Unit must have told them what a mess their ruling classes have made of affairs in India. Famine supplied evidence of the bankruptcy of statesmanship that had claimed to act as the "trustees" of a people's fate and fortune. Perhaps, no foreign rule can make good the claims made by Britishers. It would ease the world's conscience if they accepted this verdict of history and retired from an impossible position.

The long argument carried on in the pages above has for its purpose the bringing into a focus all the conditions of desolation that British methods of administration, exploitation and enlightenment have more unconsciously than consciously brought into the life of India. We are prepared to believe that British administrators did the best

The masses of Britain do not understand

for us according to the light vouchsafed to them by their history. But the time has come to say on behalf of India that the lessons of that history applied to India have gone all wrong. In their own country, the ruling classes of Britain have been able to keep their people quiet by the glory and splendour of an empire over which the sun was represented as never setting; the disruption of Britain's social life during the latter half of the 18th century and first half of the 19th that drove millions of men, women and children to the workhouses or to the factories and the mines—the history of this desolation the masses of Britain have just come to understand. But they have accepted that history, knowing that its steps cannot be retraced. It was a bad dream that had better be forgot. And they had no time, nor the power of understanding to judge of the things that were being done in their name by their ruling classes in a country so far off, beyond seven seas and thirteen rivers, to describe the distance between India and Britain with the help of an Indian idiom. They were misled by signs of wealth flowing into the country through the ports of London and Liverpool in which they had so little share. An since the beginning of the present century, the competition of the United States, Germany, and Japan in the trades and industries of the world, has created head-aches for the ruling classes of Britain, has created conditions of unemployment in the country that leave the masses of that country unconcerned with what happens to the “dependent” countries of the empire. The two world wars have increased this tendency quite naturally. And those who think or say that the masses of Britain have been roused to their responsibilities to the peoples of the “dependent” empire by the big shaking up imparted by the failures and successes of the present war, by bringing them face to face with the issues of peace and war embracing the whole world, these observers appear to be going against ordinary human nature which thinks first of its own interests and of its dependents. And, after the present war the ordinary man and woman of every country will have many headaches of their own to think of. This note of caution may appear to be cynical, unidealistic. But the people of most nations, the broad masses of them, have been made so by their disappointments with what their rulers had said and done.

In India also, apart from the depression caused by food shortage over wide areas of the country, from Bengal to Travancore, Cochin and Malabar where men and women were said to have had to live on 2—3 ozs. of food grains a day—in our country frustration wide and deep afflicted the people as they closed the year of 1943. With under-nourished bodies they could not have had vigorous minds to combat the negative policy of the Linlithgow Government. Even when a new Governor-General came in the person of Lord Wavell, who was made the ruler of India from its defence-organiser as the Commander-in-chief, no hope emerged of a political solution that would pull out the people from the slough of despondence into which they had been pushed or into which they had fallen from their own weakness and incapacity. The new Governor-General by his dramatic appearance into the midst of the famine-stricken people of Bengal, by moving army help for the relief of the famine-stricken people, supplied the key-note to his adminis-

Lord Wavell as
economic saviour

tration which is to be economic renewal and re-construction, and not any political advance. In the last volume of the *Annual Register*, we have tried to show the genesis of this programme which may be compared to rear-guard action undertaken by a retreating army. The talk of this economic progress is the last attempt of a bureaucracy to hold on to the reins of power, to prolong their irresponsible authority to as long a time as circumstances allowed.

Writing after about twelve months of the developments that form the subject matter of the study embodied in the present volume, we cannot record any improvement in the political situation in the country. The British authorities have declared more than once that they could not think of doing anything in India till the end of the war.

And, meanwhile, behind the scenes Committees appointed by the Government have been drawing up blue-prints of how India should be organised in the economic field, how the ties that bound her interests to the policies and practices of British capitalism could be tightened. With all the good will in the world, India cannot rid herself of the feeling that these blue-prints framed by foreign experts cannot serve her interests, cannot be to her ultimate good. This suspicion is a product of British policy pursued through the two hundred years of administration and exploitation.

The controversy carried on with regard to the best method of enlightenment of the disposal and use of the more than 1,000 crores of rupees worth of sterling balances accumulated in London in the accounts of

**Sterling balances
& their
re-payment**

India has been exciting attention. This huge amount has grown out of the purchases made by the Government of Britain in India to meet their war-time necessities of raw materials of which our country held some sort of a

monopoly. India is being consoled with the declaration that she was now a creditor country, having Britain as her debtor, that this position will be giving her strength to pull her weight in the market place of affairs; that the sterling balances will enable India to buy from western countries, specially from Britain, those capital goods, machine tools, big and small that will enable her to build up her own industries and forge ahead as one of the leading industrial nations of the modern world. These declarations do not appear to be carrying much hope to the Indian industrialists who believe that there was something up the sleeves of their British rivals which cannot be to India's profit. They appear to think that if the sterling balances are allowed to be used in the way that is desired by India, she will have won a power to bargain in the markets of the world for the purchase of capital goods. The insistence by Britain that the sterling balances can be made available to India by Britain selling her goods, whether for the establishment of heavy industries, or for consumption by the people of India, this insistence has been creating suspicion and distrust. It is being felt that it is not just that India should not be allowed to use her own money in the way she thought best, that Britain, her debtor, should be dictating the way in which the debt should be paid, that India should not have the choice of the markets in which she will be making her purchases of capital goods. As we write, this argument does not appear to have

capital goods. As we write, this argument does not appear to have reached the plane of settlement even with the visit of the Finance Member in the Government of India to Britain. More of bitterness we can apprehend if the controversy is carried on in the shape and form that it has taken. There are hints and suggestions that by some financial jugglery the sterling balances will be made to disappear, as appeared to have been the case during the settlement of accounts after the last great war.

One bright idea that has been featured in this connection is that the defence of India and the expenses in this behalf should be the charge of the people of India; that Britain having borne during two hundred years the burden and responsibility for the defence of this country should now be relieved of these, as India is on the way of attaining her status as a Dominion; that if the people of India were serious with regard to their demands for *Swaraj*, self-rule, they could not expect Britain to arrange and pay for their defence organisations. Even during the present war, the attempted invasion of India by Japan has put a new complexion on the whole question of the division of expenses as between India and Britain in the campaigns in the eastern borders of this country. Japan's war is as much India's as it is Britain's. For, it cannot be contended with reason that Japan would have had no reason to attack India if British and other Allied forces had not been present here; if India had not been made a base of operations directed against Japan. Because, it is well-known that Japan's world strategy of domination embraced within its sweep the country that had given birth to the Buddha whose religion has in various ways influenced life and conduct in the land of the rising sun. It may be yet unascertained what the amount of expenses would be that can be legitimately placed on the Indian exchequer. It may yet be that the sharing of the expenses as between India and Britain for the Burma campaign is a matter of argument. But there is no possibility of doubt that India would bear the major portion of this expense. And, in the accounting of these expenses, the major part of India's sterling balances held in London may be made to diminish or totally evaporate. There are other bright ideas that might play their tricks in the final settlement of this question.

These bright ideas can have their birth and growth in an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion that is unhappily prevalent in the relationship between India and Britain. We have to accept the situation, and put the best face on the matter. The world appears to have done so in the same spirit. No way is visible except two—that India shall win her freedom or Britain shall dragoon India into silence. There cannot be any doubt that Asia and the world cannot reach stability until this unnatural relation between India and Britain is ended. In things small and things great the two countries cannot judge each other with charity, with absence of ill-feeling. This was illustrated in the booklet published by the "authority" of the Government in India entitled—"Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances—1942-'43," and the "Reply" Gandhiji sent to it from his "Detention

Camp", dated the 15th July, 1943. The Government pamphlet was published in the second week of February, 1943; its preface had been written on the 13th February by, or appeared in the name of, Sir Robert Tottenham, Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, that is, three days after the commencement of Gandhiji's fast. In this letter Gandhiji has charged the writer of the pamphlet with tearing "sentences and phrases from their context" to add plausibility to his interpretation of the sayings and doings of the leaders of the Congress among whom was Gandhiji at their head. By quoting from his writings in the *Harijan* and interviews with foreign correspondents published in the same weekly, Gandhiji has built up a case that challenged the one made in the pamphlet. Sir Robert Tottenham in acknowledging its receipt did not care to meet Gandhiji's charges, but brushed these aside with the remark that the Government was convinced that Congress leadership was defeatist in intent and would have proved so in action if it had been allowed to have its way with the Indian administration. The intolerance of the writer was proved in the following lines quoted from the first para of the Home Department reply dated October 14th, 1943:

"At the outset, I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your own request, and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it."

The spirit that lay behind the words quoted above has been the spirit of British administration in India, one of arrogance, of impatience with criticism. This spirit sorts ill with the declarations made on behalf of the "United Nations" in appealing to the conscience of the world. This arrogance and impatience cannot smooth the way of reconciliation that both India and Britain must seek if their relation of about two centuries were not to crush into desolation, if they desired to play in the future a part of rich co-operation for the advancement of human good.

The recognition of the seat of evil is widespread both in India and in Britain. During the middle of July, 1943, two statements appeared, the signatories of both of which were leaders of the Christian Churches. The first was addressed by the British Council of Churches to the National Christian Church of India, in course of which they expressed the distress caused by the "long-continued political deadlock and deterioration of relations between the two peoples." This message was sent together with a covering letter from the President of the British Council of Churches, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest dignity of the State Church of Britain. The message recognized and admitted that "...beneath the political difficulties there are soreness and alienation deeply rooted in history whose ultimate causes are moral and spiritual. We admit a share in these for which in spite of the devoted services of many, the British people as a whole must accept responsibility."

The other statement was made by a number of British missionaries resident in India embodying an appeal to all parties in the country to make an entirely new approach to the political problem. The signatories did not make any claim that they had any "authority to

Churchmen's
appeal for renewal
of faith

“speak on behalf of the whole body of British missionaries” in India, but they had reasons “to believe that the opinion” which they held was “widely shared.” But with all their anxiety to help, the signatories could not make any concrete suggestion for “the restoration of good will and the attainment of a settlement acceptable to all classes in India”.

Almost in the same order of help was that which could have come from Mr. Phillips, “Personal Representative in India” of the President of the United States who desiring to meet Gandhiji and

**The Phillips
episode**

other leaders of the Congress had applied to the “appropriate authorities”, that is, the Government of Lord Linlithgow, for the requisite permission. The latter could not see their way to grant this permission. This refusal was interpreted at the time as part of British policy which could not allow to be raised “unjustified hopes in Indian circles of U. S. intervention in the Indian controversy”. Mr. Phillips had sought for permission before he went to his country temporarily, with a view to get the Congress view point which along with others he would have to report on for the information of his chief, the President of the U. S. A. Since then, Mr. Phillips appears to have submitted his interpretation of men and things in India to President Roosevelt. These have somehow found their place in a certain section of the Press of that country. The Indian public have had to be satisfied with extracts from these. It appeared that Mr. Phillips had said certain things not quite complimentary to British policy and practice in India. These have moved the Foreign Department of the Government of India to request the Government at London to declare Mr. Phillips as no longer acceptable to the Delhi-Simla Government as a representative of the President of the U. S. A. This interdict may be interpreted as a declaration by the British Government that they desired to be left alone with their Indian argument to be carried on by them in their own way, unaided by any foreign power, however friendly it might be.

The Phillips episode is one other example of the inherent conflict between the self-respect of India and the interests of Britain as an imperialist power. Those amongst us in India who had hoped that the Government of the U. S. A. or its President, would intervene in the settlement of the Indo-British differences knew not the forces that really determined international amity or enmity. In the present case, it could not be expected that one of the leaders of the “United Nations” would be going out of its way to set right relations that had got awry between another leader of the same group of Powers and a “subordinate” administration of the latter. Only, on one condition could the former interfere—in the case where the recalcitrance of the “subordinate” administration was so organized and so violent that it stood in the way of the “United Nations” winning the war. In the case of India, the revolting spirit of the people had not had the support of the Government in India which had succeeded in smothering a wide movement of anti-Government activities in the course of about three months during the latter half

**Why Government
was in no mood
for reconciliation**

of 1942. By its success in this campaign of repression the Government had demonstrated that it still commanded physical power to stifle signs of revolt, that a vast majority of the Indian people did not support those activities that had tried to upset the system of administration which had disrupted in so many ways the norms and forms of Indian life, which had disrupted the agricultural-cum-industrial economy of the country—the economy that had made the "wealth of Ind." The August-September-October disturbances of 1942 might have had a demonstrative value. But the British administration did suppress these quite easily, and thereby proved to the world that its hold over the country was as strong as ever.

The British Government could adopt this attitude because the war in Europe had turned in its favour. Writing in December, 1944, on developments in the war situation that had taken place since July, 1943, it would be unrealistic to confine attention to the last six months of that year. Today Germany is encircled on three sides of her territories; many of the bastions of her "Fortress Europa" have fallen down; many of her allies have got out of the war. It may be that her army corps are still fighting on foreign soil. But the landing of Anglo-American forces in Cherbourg, and the rolling back of German contingents from France, has put a new complexion on the war in Europe. The capture of Rome has demonstrated that Italy has practically gone out of the war, though Signor Mussolini may be living "somewhere" in north Italy almost as a refugee. Air attacks on Germany have increased in number and intensity. We have seen an estimate that gave an idea of the load of bombs that are being dropped on the Reich. In August, 1943, were dropped 3,575 tons; in September 8,190 tons; in October 5,533 tons. This was all day-light bombing in which the U. S. A. Air Force specialises as the British does in night bombing. The following from *Foreign Affairs*, January, 1944, indicated what the purpose of these air attacks was:

"The air attack plainly is envisaged now not as supplying a knock-out blow to Germany but as a means of softening her up for an invasion across the Channel. Since the beginning of the war the majority of American senior officers have felt that a cross-Channel invasion was, all things considered, the best and the most sure way to bring Germany to her knees. They considered the Mediterranean operations and the air offensive as 'softening' and diversionary operations preliminary to that one end.

Against that Day Germany has not been idle in preparing. In Russia she has had to make "strategic withdrawal in great depth and on a broad front." Finland and Rumania and Bulgaria have gone out of the war. Between July and late November 1943, the Russians re-occupied 1,40,000 square miles of their own territory; the battle lines were approaching the pre-1939 frontiers. Most of the credit of this success must belong to Russia alone. The dictator of the Soviet has fashioned the States of the Federation into a mighty machine for war, both defensive and offensive. Though during the last six months of 1943 the "second front" so much desired by the Russians to be opened by the Anglo-American forces did not come into being, the High Command of Germany could not ignore the possibilities of

Germany at
bay

German
Strategy

such a danger. Therefore did they shorten their battle lines in Russia. An authority on German strategy writing in the *Picture Post* of October 30, 1943, on the "last chance" of Germany indicated the need of such a tactic.

"Thus from the German standpoint the most pressing problem of all is the formation of new strategic reserves, and this can only be undertaken at the cost of shortening the eastern front.....That is the core of the German military problem."

The same writer has also tried to point out to the cause which was responsible for the failure of Germany to break up Russian resistance even though her forces had penetrated so deep into the Russian soil. He thinks that this penetration became a handicap to the Germans. It is no doubt true that she had forced her way into the Caucasian mountains, had gone as far east as the Volga, but she could not break the military machine that Marshal Stalin had built up.

**The failure of
German High
Command**

"...In Russia the German General Staff lost its sense of distance. And while the Panzer divisions chased over the boundless Russian plains as far as Moscow and Stalingrad without forcing a decision, the German Command lost the measure of another element of strategy: Time."

Another authority, the military and naval correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, has also made the same deductions from the study of events happening in Europe.

"...The object of German strategy from this time on must be to gain time—time for the United Nations to sicken of the bloodshed, time for dissensions to arise among them, time for political shifts of power in Germany herself which may make it possible for her to secure better terms. The German 'Heartland', without which Germany cannot go on fighting, may be described as the territory of Germany itself, western and central Poland, Denmark, the Low Countries, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary, northern Yugoslavia, Austria, Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands and part of France. This central and vital area must be held. Once it is invaded, the beginning of the end is at hand....."

This interpretation of events has been borne out by the invasion of the continent by Anglo-American forces. And Germany appears to be fighting with her back to the wall. From the

**The Teheran
Conference**

west these allied armies are trying to break into Germany. From the east the Soviet forces have been breaking into Hungary. There appears to be a race between these two invading forces as to who shall reach the "heartland" of Germany first. Twelve months have passed by since those words were written, but the leaders of the "United Nations" do not appear to be sickening with bloodshed; they have managed to keep intact their unity of purpose which is the elimination of Germany's power for mischief from the life of Europe. The foreign secretaries of the U. S. A., of Britain and of the Soviet met at Moscow to straighten out any differences that might be still lingering in the minds of the leading Powers of the world. President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill and Marshal Stalin met at Teheran to put the coping stone on their structure of alliance. At the end of it they issued a declaration to the peoples whom war has caught in its tentacles. This should have a place in the *Register* :

"We—the President of the U. S., the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and the Premier of the Soviet Union—have shaped and confirmed our common policy. We

express our determination that our nations shall work together in the war and in the peace that will follow.

"We have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces. We have reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of operations which will be undertaken from the east, west and south. The common understanding which we have here reached guarantees that victory will be ours. No power can prevent our destroying the German armies by land, their U-boats by sea, and their air plants from the air. Our attacks will be relentless and increasing.

"We are sure that our concord will make it an enduring peace. We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the United Nations to make a peace which will command the good will of the world and banish war for many generations. We have surveyed the problems of the future. We shall seek the co-operation of all nations, large and small, whose people are dedicated to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them as they choose to come into a world family of democratic nations. We look to the day when all peoples of the world may live free lives untouched by tyranny, and according to their varying desires and their own consciences. We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose.

This declaration had reference primarily to affairs in Europe disturbed by German ambitions. But the "United Nations," their

The Cairo
Conference

leaders, had another enemy to take account of. In fighting this enemy the help of Russia could not be had. Therefore, there was a meeting of President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang

Kai-shek, held at Cairo. The decisions of this conference were made known to the world in the following declaration.

"The military missions have agreed on future operations against Japan. The three great Allies are fighting this war to restrain and punish the aggression of Japan. They covet no gain and have no thought of territorial expansion.

"It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since 1941, and that all territories stolen from China shall be restored. Japan will be expelled from all other territories taken by violence and greed. In due course Korea shall become free and independent.

"With these objects in view, the three Allies, in harmony with those of the United Nations at war with Japan, will persevere in the serious and prolonged operations necessary to procure the unconditional surrender of Japan."

The promises made and the hopes expressed at Cairo cannot be said to have taken shape since the next twelve months. It is

Fight against
Japan

true that an invasion of India by Japan has been beaten back in course of which places in the Naga hills and in the little State of Manipur have found mention in modern world history. Fifty years back

there was an attempt made by the ruling classes of Manipur to throw off the trammels of British authority; and Manipur through Tikendrajit, general of the army, showed to the world that heroism still lingered in the hills of the State that had in times beyond memory, during the Mahabharatan age, flit through Indian history. Seven hundred miles south in the Arrakan area, British attempts to drive the Japanese were abortive, and remain so even in December, 1944. This part of the battle front being a British responsibility, the failure to make good can be explained by the fact that Britain was so engaged in Europe to be able to divert any major forces to the Indian Ocean area. It is true that the U. S. commander, Major-General Stillwell, was making things hum in a part of Indo-Burma frontiers with the help of his Chinese troops, aided by U. S. 10th Air Force. But the main credit for the fight against Japan must go to the combined forces of U. S. marines, Australian and New Zealand divisions commanded by General MacArthur. The New Guinea and New Georgia positions of Japan had

been all but liquidated. Rabaul, the key Japanese base in this area, still held. But it appears to have been rendered inoffensive. For, we have not heard that from this stronghold Japanese forces have issued to halt any of the offensives that under General MacArthur's direction were approaching the Marianas and the Marshal islands where since 1919 Japan had been building various nests of offense and defense. But the main American efforts were directed by Admiral Nimitz with his headquarters at Pearl Harbour against Japanese positions in the mid-Pacific. Carrier task forces hammered at Japan's "unsinkable aircraft carriers"—the islands of Micronesia." In the heart of these stood Truk, as "impregnable" as Nature and man could make it. It is a group of eleven hilly, defensible islands set in a 30-mile wide lagoon and encircled by a coral reef. These islands can be shelled by capital ships standing off the reef, can be bombed down from the air. There have been one or two attacks on Truk reported in the Press. But it appears that this Japanese base has been neutralized or made useless to the Japanese. For, we have to record that from Australia General MacArthur has been able to mount an attack on the Philippine islands, on the island of Leyete, without being troubled by Rabaul or Truk. We can now regard Japan's 1942 thrust at Australia as part of a delaying action only. Japanese bases in the heart of the mid-Pacific have not been able to halt the destructive activities directed by Admiral Nimitz from his 5,000 miles distant headquarters at Pearl Harbour.

From this study it becomes possible to say that both in Europe and in Asia, the Axis Powers, Germany and Japan, appear to be fighting on the defensive. How long they will be able to prolong the war, only the future can say. It is only in China that Japan appears to be making some headway. On the 7th of July, 1943, China celebrated a memorable anniversary: *San Ch' i*—"Triple Seven", or the seventh day of the seventh month of the seventh year of resistance to Japan. She had fought almost alone for these years; her strategy of "selling space for time" was not yet vindicated. Two terrible famines had swept Honan and Kwantung. The price level was 87 times the pre-war level; there was the "hunger of vast armies for medicines and munitions", as there was the growing paralysis of transport. During the last twelve months since the declaration of Cairo, things have worsened in China. The recall of General Stillwell, the U. S.-born Chief of Staff of the Generalissimo, drew attention to this. The world's Press was plastered with news that the Chiang Kai-shek regime was mediaeval, effete and reactionary; that instead of fighting the Japanese it has been conserving its forces and resources for the final brush-up with the Chinese communists; that an influential sector of the ruling class in China was in league with the Japanese and their Chinese supporters. From Moscow issued the voice of impatience with Chinese ways of doing things, with the failure of the Chiang Kai-shek regime to make it up with the Chinese communists at this supreme hour of crisis in the modern life of the country. In October-November, 1943, China was one of the great Powers of the world, one of the "Big Four"—the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China. As we write, this position seems to have

Sorrows & suffer-
ings of China

been lost by her ; at least we do not hear it from the lips of British public men and publicists. And at the eighth year of her war with Japan, China appears to have lost caste with the moulders of public opinion in the modern world. We in India can be observers only of these developments in international politics, in the making and re-making of Great Powers.

As we close the survey of things Indian, and things extra-Indian, in our attempt to understand and explain these, we cannot shake off the influence of the air of frustration that hovers over the world. The system of administration that prevails in India has done nothing to enlist the heart and mind of the Indian people on the side of the "United Nations"; the enthusiasm and spirit of adventure that inform the life and conduct of the leading nations of the world are absent from India. Dissatisfaction with this order of things is becoming unhealthy, because it cannot find an outlet of expression. With a sense of fatality the masses of the people appear to be watching the shape of things, without hope and without any elation. Famine, pestilence, under-nourishment, these do not generate hope and elation. The classes who have been fighting for a better and more self-respecting life for their people appear to have accepted defeat at the hands of the bureaucracy. But all hope is not lost as long as there are men amongst us who dare walk alone, braving the thunder and the rain. The generation of them who since the beginning of this century have been witnesses to the lashing of the waves of national feeling and their retirement into the troughs of depression, they do not lose hope. And the men and women who have followed them into paths of danger and sacrifice, they do not lose hope. And in the inspiration of that memory, drawn by the vision of a renovated life for their people, they hope and work.—(*Specially contributed by Sri Suresh Chandra Deb*).

The Council of State

Monsoon Session—New Delhi—2nd to 31st August 1943

CONGRATULATIONS TO LORD WAVELL

The Council of State, which began its monsoon session at New Delhi on the 2nd. August 1943 decided, on the suggestion of the President, *Sir Manekji Dadabhoi*, to send congratulations to Field Marshall Viscount Wavell, a former member of the Council of State on his appointment as Viceroy of India. *Pandit Kunzru* thought the Council's congratulations might have other implications, and to him, the course suggested by the President, seemed to be rather unusual. *Pandit Kunzru* further said it was not an unimportant matter as some members had tried to make it. Such an action should only be taken if there was unanimity. If the Chair had consulted Party leaders before, it would have been better. They could not look at the matter from a purely personal point of view. They had to take the political aspect into consideration. Some of them had criticised his appointment. It would be unfair to those members, if a message was sent, purporting to be from all sides of the House. They could only join in sending a message if they were satisfied on the political side. He was sure if the President asked the Council to drop the message, the Council would agree to do so. As regards Viscount Wavell, he said, it was the earnest wish that he might succeed where others had failed. *Mr. P. N. Saprú* said that they knew nothing about Viscount Wavell's politics. He might prove to be a good statesman, or equally, he might prove to be a bad one. A question of principle was involved and they could not prejudge him and offer him congratulations. They were not concerned with personalities but with politics. The President reminded the House that he had not mentioned a word about politics in his original motion. He had forty years of experience of the work of the Council and was not going to introduce any politics in the message which was to be cabled. Thereupon, *Pandit Kunzru* and his party withdrew their opposition and the motion was adopted against great applause.

DIFFERENCE IN PAY OF ARMY OFFICERS

3rd, AUGUST :—The Council of State to-day rejected by 24 votes to 10, *Pt. H. N. Kunzru's* resolution urging that Indian-commissioned officers serving abroad be paid at the same rate as British officers in the Indian Army and that the Viceroy's commissioned officers and Indian soldiers serving abroad should be paid at the same rates as persons occupying corresponding positions in the British Army serving alongside the Indian Army. Moving his resolution, *Pandit Kunzru* said that his recent visit to the Middle East had made him realise the urgency of the question. The Indian officers there had strong feelings on this matter. Their salaries should not be compared with those of the British service officers, but with regular British officers belonging to the Indian army. Although their pay was smaller, their expenses in messes and otherwise were just the same as those of British officers. Even the special allowances given to them were not sufficient to make up the difference. As regards V.C.O.'s, he pointed out, that there was a great disparity between their pay and the pay of sergeants and warrant officers in the British army. The pay of a V.C.O. should be commensurate with the responsibility placed on him. The Pandit asked why there should be any difference in the remuneration of two persons serving together. The Indian officers in the Middle East had complained to him that they got less than even the Sudanese and the Singhalese. *Sir Buta Singh*, *Mr. Kalikar*, *Sir A. P. Patro*, *R. B. Lala Ram Saran Dass* and *Mr. Padshah* supported the resolution.

Declaring that no one was more concerned with the welfare and contentment of the Indian army than he was, *His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief* explained the factors which governed the pay of an army, and which were bound up with the economic situation in no small degree, and observed that the pay of an army could not be separated from the general conditions of economy in the country from which the soldiers came and from conditions of pay in civil life. Hasty generosity might defeat its own object and might bring in the end more discontentment. There was the financial aspect to consider, but he was not basing his argument on that. The matter of pay of Indian officers and soldiers would remain his constant care so long as he remained C-in-C. in India. It would be

his constant endeavour to reward Indian troops for their great deeds of gallantry. So far as the motive of the resolution was concerned, he was in entire sympathy, but the proposals it contained were only one part of the proposals that he was examining for the whole Indian army. It was well-known, he said, that discrepancies existed and had existed for some time, as a result of which—it was also common knowledge—some officers must have felt a certain amount of dissatisfaction. The mover did not urge the same rates of pay everywhere, but only in the Middle East command. After referring to the claims of those serving in Burma, Ceylon and Aden, who were also carrying the same burden as British soldiers, he said if larger scales were introduced for those serving overseas, it might create a difficult situation and those in India would naturally clamour. Proceeding, the C-in-C. said that without reasonable contentment, an army could not be efficient. But this contentment must be reached by means which were within bounds of reason. It might be difficult to gainsay the theory that men serving in the same field, doing the same kind of work, should receive the same remuneration. If the mover thought that the prestige of an army suffered because of lower pay, he was wrong. He asked the mover to withdraw the resolution in view of his assurance that he would constantly endeavour to improve the welfare and contentment of the Indian army. Replying to the debate, *Pandit Kunzru* said he could not regard the assurance as sufficient. He was, therefore, unable to withdraw the resolution. The resolution was lost by 24 vote to 10.

SOUTH AFRICAN PEGGING LEGISLATION

4th. AUGUST :—The Council of State discussed the South African Pegging legislation to day. Mr. G. S. *Bozman*, Secretary, Indian Overseas Department, initiating the discussion, said that the Government considered the legislation as repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune. He read short extracts from some of the speeches made on the Bill in the South African Parliament to indicate that at least some of the members of the Union Parliament also regarded the Bill as inopportune and repugnant. He claimed that people in South Africa were already aware of the keen resentment aroused in India by all shades of political thought and of the identity of views between the Government and the people in that respect. Mr. P. N. *Sapru*, Sir A. P. *Patro*, *Pandit Kunzru*, Mr. *Parkar*, Rai Bahadur *Srinarain Mahta*, Mr. *Padshah*, Rai Bahadur *Ram Saran Das*, Mr. *Kalika* and Sir *Charanjit Singh* participated in the debate.

Mr. *Sapru* who spoke with considerable feeling, charged the South African Government with definite breach of the Cape Town Agreement. He claimed that the living space in South Africa was very much less for Indians as compared to Europeans. Mr. *Sapru* was totally opposed to statutory segregation and wanted economic sanctions to be applied immediately against South Africa. He did not want any South African to command an Indian army and urged that the Government should impose all the social, political and economic disabilities on South Africans at present resident in India as those imposed on Indian settlers in South Africa. *Pandit Kunzru* wanted the Council to judge the issue against the background of India's war effort, testimony to which was paid by the Viceroy on Monday last. Indian soldiers, he said, were responsible for saving Africa and yet the attitude of the South African Government had remained unaltered. *Pandit Kunzru* said that the Cape Town Agreement had remained a dead letter and new devices were being discovered to drive Indians out of Africa. The Pegging Act closed further avenues for Indians to invest their savings. Pegging legislation, he claimed, would inflict serious economic injuries on Indians in South Africa. He urged that all South Africans in service should be sent away at once and economic sanctions should be enforced against South Africa forthwith.

Mr. *Mahta* was opposed to the withdrawal of the High Commissioner and regretted that the Government had not consulted the Standing Emigration Committee on the subject. Mr. *Padshah* supported economic sanctions on behalf of the Muslim League Party. He wanted the withdrawal of the Indian Army from Africa.

Rai Bahadur *Lala Ram Saran Das* said whenever two Governments fell out, the natural conclusion would be the breaking off of diplomatic relations. It might be said the Government of India in this case had put as much pressure as they could and presumably they could do no more, but they should recall their High Commissioner, as there should be complete severance of diplomatic and trade relations with South Africa. Mr. *Kalika* asked what the British Government had done to prevent the passage of the Pegging Bill and to see that Indians were not maltreated.

He said unless there were economic sanctions behind the action which the Government of India contemplated taking against South Africa, the white races could not be made to appreciate that Indians were also human beings. Winding up the discussion, Mr. *Bozman* said the result of the debate was highly satisfactory and Government felt that the purpose they had in mind in initiating this debate had been well-served by the discussion. Mr. *Bozman* did not like to express his or the Government of India's opinion on these suggestions at that stage, as he wished to avoid all appearance of supporting the Union Government. But, he said, all these suggestions would be carefully considered.

RECONSTITUTION OF HINDU LAW

5th. AUGUST :—Discussing non-official resolutions to-day, the Council of State adopted *R. B. Srinarain Mahtha's* resolution, recommending the reconstitution of the Hindu Law Committee for the purpose of suitably amending and codifying the Hindu law in all its branches. *R. B. Mahtha* referred to the Rau Committee's monumental work, which Government had also recognised. He asked why Government had not fulfilled their promises. Was it due to the addition of more reactionary members in the Executive Council, he asked. The Hindu society, Mr. *Mahtha* claimed, had held progressive views and had always adjusted itself to the changing needs of the times, assimilating certain things and eliminating others. Mr. *Mahtha* said that it was imperative that the entire law should be amended and codified in the light of modern needs. He maintained that the Hindu India was behind his resolution and Government would have the utmost backing in this task. Mr. *P. N. Sapru* characterised the present social system to be responsible for having brought about the ruin of the country. He wanted the Hindu society to be based on modern democratic concepts and the ugly caste system done away with. He felt that the Hindu members in the Executive Council represented the most reactionary element not only in politics but in religious matters. He was, therefore, apprehensive of the fate of the report of a committee of the kind suggested in the resolution. Modern Hindu mind, he said, was for progress and modern Hindu mind would carry the whole country with it. *Sardar Sobha Singh* also urged on the Government to reappoint the committee. He maintained that interpretations and decisions of the High Courts and the Privy Council on various matters pertaining to the Hindu law, were so different and confusing that there was a radical need of the codification of the entire law and the completion of the work of the Rau Committee. Mr. *Kalika* conceded that codification of the Hindu law might be necessary, but he entertained doubts if it would be practicable or even possible to have the whole law codified by a committee, working in normal manner, within three or even five years. He wanted the committee to be representative of all shades of Hindu opinion. As for amending the Hindu law, he was doubtful if a committee, holding particular views, could amend the law in a form that would be acceptable to the whole of India. He repudiated the claim that the modern Hindu mind had been able to change the mind of the masses. *Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das*, said that it was only when reformers in the legislature could carry the masses with them that their utterances would have any effect. He asked what the position would be if a majority community in a legislature decided to pull down all churches and carried their decision into effect. Just as there were safeguards in constitutions on the Continent against this type of action, he wanted the Indian constitution also to have similar safeguards for the interests of the minority communities and those who belonged to orthodox classes. He would not at that stage object to the formation of the committee, but desired that the committee should consist of all shades of opinion, including the orthodox. Mr. *Hossain Imam* said that it was not a resolution on which there could be any violent difference of opinion. It would be putting the cart before the horse, if the resolution was opposed on the assumption that some of the amendments suggested by the committee would not be acceptable to the Hindu society. Replying on behalf of the Government, Mr. *S. A. Lal*, Deputy Secretary, Legislative Department, said, the recommendation embodied in the resolution was one with which, in principle, he had the fullest sympathy. But Government would have to consider, whether a comprehensive codification of the Hindu law was a task to which it would be appropriate to devote time and labour during the war period. Government would, of course, pay due regard to the attitude of the House. In the circumstances, he believed, that the mover would perhaps seek leave of the House to withdraw the resolution. If the resolution was pressed to a division, Government would remain neutral, concluded

Mr. Lal, Pandit Kunzru held that the Government's reply indicated a departure in the attitude of the Government towards the question of the codification of the Hindu law in successive stages, to which it had committed itself in the preamble to the bill relating to Hindu Intestate Succession. Government had now chosen to be neutral, but he apprehended that they would soon go further and jettison the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill. Winding up the debate, Mr. Mahtha objected to the absence of the Law Member from the House on such an important occasion and expressed surprise at the change in the attitude of the Government. Nobody shouted 'no', when votes were taken, and the resolution was passed. The Council accepted the resolution of Mr. P. N. Saprú, recommending to the Government to represent to His Majesty's Government that an Agent to the Government of India be appointed in British Guiana and Trinidad to watch the Indian interests. The resolution was unanimously passed.

ALARMING POSITION OF HINDU CATTLE

6th. AUGUST:—The Council of State discussed Mr. Hossain Imam's resolution urging the import of meat from U. S. A. and Australia for the requirements of the defence services and also recommending the import of livestock from nearby countries for supply to the agriculturists at reduced prices to encourage the grow-more-food campaign. Sir Jogendra Singh, in the course of his speech, gave the assurance that his Department were anxiously watching the cattle position and that there was at present no real cause for alarm. As regards the recommendations made by the mover, Sir Jogendra pointed out, the need for such action had not arisen, but if it did, he was sure that the Food Member would give the recommendation every consideration. Upon this assurance the mover withdrew his resolution. In the course of the debate before the resolution was withdrawn, Mr. Hossain Imam said that the main background of the resolution was the large consumption of meat by foreign troops and prisoners of war in India. The number of cattle slaughtered now had risen by five times the peace-time number. Moreover in peacetime it was only the surplus cattle that was slaughtered, but now attractive prices were offered and the best cattle taken away for meat purposes. Not only were the agriculturists affected, but ghee and milk had also become scarce throughout India. He said 2,70,000 head of cattle were slaughtered in this country during the last year. He alleged that orders of the Central Government regarding protected cattle were not being carried out by the slaughterers notwithstanding the fact the slaughter of cattle was looked down upon by a large majority of the people of India. They could not carry out the grow-more-food campaign side by side with this slaughter. He, therefore, urged that in order to relieve the situation dehydrated meat should be imported from U. S. A. and Australia as also milk for the use of the troops and livestock be imported from neighbouring countries. R. B. Mahtha related conditions in the province of Bihar and said that the price of a pair of bullocks had gone up five times. It was useless to have campaigns like 'grow more food,' because any agriculturist, if he had land, cattle and money to purchase seed, would do his utmost for the crop. He did not know the shipping position, but he hoped the Government would do their best in the matter. R. B. Lala Ram Saran Das said that slaughter of cattle had begun in districts where there used to be no slaughter. Pure ghee was so scarce that it was not available even, for religious ceremonies. Mr. P. N. Saprú apprehended that when the attack on Burma would be launched and more Allied forces came to India, the number of cattle slaughtered would increase. He criticised the non-publication of the health report during the last two years on the excuse of paper economy. Pandit Kunzru said that so far as he was aware Government had done nothing practical to increase livestock of the right kind as would increase the supply of ghee and milk in the country. As U. S. A. and Australia had flourishing meat trade, he felt, it would put on them a smaller strain than on this country to supply the meat requirements of the Government of India. The resolution was further supported by Mr. Padshah, Mr. Mahd. Hossain and Sir Buta Singh and Sir Hissam-ud-Din while Sir A. P. Patro did not approve of the proposal to import cattle from abroad as foreign bulls would not thrive in India. He urged that cattle breeding should be intensively developed with the material available in India. Sir Jogendra Singh, Member, Education, Health and Lands, expressed sympathy with the object of the resolution. Sir Jogendra laid stress on the need of proper nutrition for all the Indian people and said in a country like India, milk was the most important part of diet and the problem therefore was to increase India's milk supply. He announced that he was appointing a committee

to consider the public health in India and he was glad that Sir Joseph Bhore had agreed to preside over the committee. The mover withdrew the resolution and the Council adjourned till the 10th.

RECIPROCITY ACT AMEND BILL.

10th. AUGUST :—The Council of State to-day passed, without amendment, the Reciprocity Act Amendment Bill as passed by the Legislative Assembly. Messrs. *Bozman, Kunzru, Padshah, Kulikar, Ramsarandas, Hossain Imam* and Doctor *Khare* participated in the discussion. Mr. *Bozman*, moving the consideration of the bill, explained that the Government had originally felt that they would be able to deal with the problem, such as had arisen from the South African Pegging Legislation, by the rule-making powers given to them by the original Act. He said that the bill was of general applicability and the Council would be well advised to deal with the bill without discussing the South African situation, which the House had already discussed. Pandit *Kunzru* was doubtful of the effectiveness of the legislation. He said that the crux of the problem lay whether they in India, could deprive any South African of his franchise. He maintained that they could not under the Government of India Act, 1935. The same thing applied to South Africans holding office in India. Under the Government of India Act, Indian legislatures were powerless to dismiss them, even if they wanted to do so. He urged that the Government should approach His Majesty's Government for amendment of the Government of India Act. This demand of Pandit *Kunzru* was supported by other speakers, all of whom urged that the Government of India Act should be amended forthwith to make retaliation against South Africa effective. Mr. *Bozman*, replying to the debate, pointed out that the bill was of general application and was not specifically directed against South Africa. He wanted the House to realise the likely repercussions of such a statutory provision in other parts of the Empire. He admitted the correctness of the position stated by Pandit *Kunzru* in regard to franchise and holding office under the Government of India Act and said that the Government had taken note of the views expressed in the House to day, particularly in regard to their approaching His Majesty's Government for an amendment of the Government of India Act. Dr. *Khare* said that the bill will be enforced at once. He admitted that it did not go a long way to deal with the problem facing them, but he wanted the Council to realise that India was a dependency, while South Africa was an independent dominion. There were all the disabilities resulting from the political status of India to which they must not shut their eyes. The Council passed the bill and adjourned till August 12.

DEBATE ON THE FOOD SITUATION

12th. AUGUST :—The Council of State discussed the food situation to-day. *Major-General Wood*, initiating the discussion, made a comprehensive survey of the food problem and examined the reasons for an insufficient degree of success of Government's policy in the last six months. General *Wood* postulated that whatever the food policy might be in the country, there was but one instrument and one machinery for the execution of that policy, namely, the administrative organisations of the provinces and States. He added :—"I wish to make it clear that not only have the Central Government no executive instrument or machinery for the execution of food administration, but that it would be improper for the Centre to attempt to build up such an instrument and impossible to do so, even were it deemed desirable to do so. He held that, while the Centre could plan, co-ordinate and direct, it was dependent for execution on the administrations of the provinces and States. It meant that the measure of success of food administration in India depended, in the aggregate and in the ultimate resort, on the efficiency or otherwise of food administration by the provinces and States. Side by side, General *Wood* stressed the importance of physical control as a basis for all other forms of control.

The first problem to be faced, he said, was how to secure an adequate flow of foodgrains. He would not grudge the cultivator the little extra that circumstances now permitted him to eat. There, however, remained the extremely difficult problem of ensuring that the cultivator did not withhold more than he required. In this connection General *Wood* felt that the big zamindars and landowners of this country had not appreciated the extent to which it had been put in their power to assist India in her food difficulties to-day. He added : "If the bigger man hoards his stock for a higher price it will not be without its effects on the smaller man. In this first stage of physical control, the big landowners and zamindars have a

responsibility. I am speaking in my personal capacity and I hope the future will show a better leadership than has been apparent in the last six months.' Proceeding, General Wood said that the Central Government had the prime responsibility that must rest on the Centre alone of distributing the surplus of the provinces and States. He, however, explained that the portion that was handed over by the Central Government to a deficient province was but a small fraction of the totality of its requirements. Arguing from this, General Wood maintained that the salvation of a province or a State did not lie in a species of charity handed out by the Centre. The major portion of their salvation lay within their own boundaries. Dealing with Bengal, General Wood said that in addition to the assistance brought to Bengal by free trade, the Government of India had delivered to that province over one train a day of foodgrains from January 1 to July 31. To turn to the future, "Aus" crop was beginning to be harvested and would progressively come into the market during September. This rice crop, if shared at one pound per head per day, will provide fully for the requirements of the sixty million people of Bengal for upwards of ninety days if the domestic resources of the province were brought under some form of controlled distribution.

Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Dass condemned the present system of purchases by the Government and suggested that the whole crop should be purchased by the Government and then distribution made, in accordance with the advice of a committee of officials and publicmen, which should be constituted for the purpose. *Lala Ram Saran* also referred to a responsible Minister of the Punjab having lectured to Zamindars to hoard stocks and not to bring them to market, and asked what the Government of India had done to meet this open challenge to the Central Government. He wondered why no action had been taken.

Mr. M. N. Dalal said the food situation in the country was very serious. Food riots once they started, he warned, might become a greater menace to India than even Japanese aggression. *Mr. Dalal* asked the Government of India to give up all considerations of provincial autonomy, when the question of the life and death of so many people was before them, and also to lay aside excuses of lack of shipping space. Government should import foodgrains and also import more agricultural machinery.

Sir Buta Singh stated that in the Punjab agents coming from deficit provinces had been buying wheat freely at an average rate of about Rs. 10 per annum. The overhead charges of taking the same to distances of 1,000 miles came to about Rs. 2-8 per maund. He understood that flour in Calcutta was selling at Rs. 35 or above per maund. He, therefore, liked to ask the Government as to who pocketed the enormous difference between the buying price in the Punjab and the selling price in Calcutta. Proceeding, *Sir Buta Singh* said the Punjab would not like to sell cheaply to traders and so enable them to make enormous profits at the cost of the cultivator. If they could be assured that prices in deficit areas would be controlled and that dying people would get their food at actual purchase prices plus freight and essential minimum overhead charges, then this province would be happy to be selling at prices far below those prevailing in Bengal. He strongly refuted the charge that cultivators in the Punjab were hoarding wheat with a view to profiteering.

Mr. S. K. Roy Chaudhury said Bengal had fallen on very evil days. They had cyclones and floods and the crops were affected. He urged that famine should be declared in the province.

Col. Sir Hissamuddin asked the Government to consider the feasibility of gradually introducing free trade throughout India as the means of ensuring steady supply, thereby bringing down the general price level.

Sir David Devadoss complained that Government had been all along under the impression that food was no problem for India. Even the Rationing Expert, recently brought from England before he literally landed in the country, expressed his opinion that there was no shortage, but the country suffered from hoarding. Where are the hoarded stocks, asked *Sir David*. Had Government discovered them and had they punished the hoarders? He referred to the serious outbreak of cholera in Malabar and other parts of the Madras presidency and said owing to malnutrition, the people had no stamina to resist the disease. He said it was time that Government stopped thinking of prestige and rules and regulations. They should rush food to the distress areas, and import foodstuffs from outside to meet the shortage in the country.

Sir A. P. Patro regretted that while both the urban and rural population were suffering, a certain class of people were taking advantage of the situation and exploiting it to their own ends. He failed to find a proper appreciation of the condition in the rural areas in the speeches of the Food Member in the Assembly and the Food Secretary in the Council this morning. He urged the Central Government to strongly advise the provinces to move in the matter and relieve distress in the rural areas.

Sir Jogendra Singh, Member, Education, Health and Lands, said: We complain of high prices of foodstuffs. The fact is that we, the educated classes, have done little to improve rural conditions and to modernise production. We have been caught by the war with the result that normal channels of trade have ceased to flow. *Sir Jogendra* announced that his department were preparing material for committees which would plan a programme of rural reconstruction. The Educational Adviser was engaged in collecting material for a programme of education, both literary and technical. An agricultural committee would be at work from about November 1, this year.

Mr. Hossain Imam deplored that the Food Department which was essentially responsible for maintaining the home front had been made a shuttle cock. He felt that they could not get a fair deal when there was no security of tenure for the members holding the portfolio. Referring to the present crisis, *Mr. Hossain Imam* asserted that as much as Rs. 3.15 lakhs worth of foodgrains had been expected during March on private account, the figures for April, being Rs. 3.54 lakhs. The export of foodgrains during 1942-43 were worth Rs. 47 crores.

The *Maharajkumar of Nashipur* claimed that export of rice from India and storage of food for the defence services had contributed to the present situation. In his opinion purchase of the whole stock by the Government and distribution to the entire population of the province by a system of control and rationing was the only remedy to meet the situation in Bengal.

Messrs. Kumar Shankar Ray Chawdhury, Ali Ashgar and N. K. Das also participated in the debate. *Mr. Das* complained that Orissa had suffered by sudden introduction of free trade. Large number of people from the neighbouring province of Bengal invaded his province and bought up stock at high prices. He disputed the claim that Orissa was a surplus province.

13th. AUGUST :—*Mr. N. K. Das*, continuing his speech from yesterday, said there were visible signs of scarcity in Orissa also. He considered that the situation in Bengal had arisen on account of natural calamities, exports to Ceylon and huge military purchases. He stressed the need of a vigorous policy in respect of the grow-more-food campaign. *Sir Ramuni Menon* said that while he thought that the Central Government could not be held solely responsible for past mistakes, no useful purpose would be served in trying to apportion blame. The immediate task was to direct all efforts to solve the problem.

R. B. S. K. Das said that it was due to lack of foresight on the part of the Government that Bengal had been placed in its present position. He had seen people in Calcutta going through the contents of the dustbins in search of a few pieces of food. He admitted that the military had to be properly fed, but they should make purchases in excess of their needs, especially in these days of distress. He wanted the Government of India to declare famine in Bengal and institute control over stocks and prices.

Pandit Hirdaynath Kunzru asserted that it was the want of a food policy by the Government of India which was responsible for the present food crisis in the country. Referring to the constitutional issue, the Pandit said that the Government of India were not so helpless as they made the people believe. He said surely if the Government were all powerful to keep *Mr. Gandhi* in detention and prevent all contacts with him, they could also compel the Provincial Governments to follow their central food policy. He referred to the amendments of the Government of India Act and declaration of emergency by the Governor-General after the outbreak of the war. The powers given to the Governor-General, he said, were intended to be used in a crisis like that of food and he failed to understand why they were not being used. The Pandit urged for a radical change in the Government of India's policy to secure better co-operation with the people and provinces of India. The establishment of National Government would solve the problem, he said. He wanted a central purchasing agency with a businessman at its head and urged that the Government should set aside legal difficulties and stand up as the Government of the country and not merely as the servant of provincial Governments.

An earnest appeal for co-operation and help was made by the new Food Member, *Sir Jawala Prosad Srivastava*. He said : "In the name of our country, I appeal, may I demand co-operation and help ? In this task, without the help of my colleagues, without the fullest co-operation of the public and their leaders and their Government, nothing can be accomplished. I will not spare myself or my department, in seeking the job through. He continued : "I wish to democratize the department in the sense that it must work in accordance with the wishes of the people, for whose benefit it exists. At the same time, it will not hesitate to reinforce ruthlessly any measure which may be necessary and to crush any individual or corporation who seek to profit from the sufferings of the many. I will not hesitate to enforce an all-India policy in a vital matter of this kind. I am determined not to give in to complacency or defeatism. With God's help I promise that nothing will be left undone to get the results that the country demands. And I am sure that I have your support and co-operation in this tremendous task (cheers). As for importing foodgrains into India, he said that he entirely agreed with the suggestions and would use his best endeavours for that purpose. He disclosed that *Mis Majesty's Government* had been approached on the subject. He however warned the Council that the matter did not rest with him. The provision of shipping and foreign exchange were some of the difficulties but he said that he would do his best. Similarly, the provision of more consumers' goods for the cultivator was having his fullest support. Lastly, he welcomed the suggestion that landlords and those who had a stake in the countryside should take a larger and more direct interest in the growing and procurement of food and it was his intention to see how best they could harness them to that end.

Control and more control until complete rationing was achieved was the policy of the Government of India, declared *Major-General Wood*, Food Secretary, winding up the debate. This plan of the Government has been unfolded to the public and he was at a loss to understand why Government were being accused of not disclosing their future plan. *Major-General Wood* made reference to free-trade and said that it should be recognised that it did not necessarily mean the free buying and selling of goods ; it also meant freedom in the matter of transport, availability of transport and other considerations and to talk of free trade in conditions that obtained in war and as applying in this country was a misnomer. It could be only a partial free trade and under it, the easiest outlet the longest purse, would win. The Council then adjourned.

EXPORT OF RICE FROM CALCUTTA

14th. AUGUST :—In the Council of State to-day, the Chairman, *Sir David Devadoss*, who presided in the absence of the President, *Sir Manekji Dadabhai* said that he could not admit *Mr. V. V. Kaliker's* adjournment motion to discuss the failure of the Government to stop export of a large consignment of rice from Calcutta to South Africa. *Sir David* explained that a chairman had all the powers of the President only inside the House, but had no authority to admit questions, resolutions and adjournment motions, notice of which was usually given before the House met. He, therefore, could not admit the adjournment motion, which was tabled just before the meeting started to-day. He would leave it to the discretion of the President and the motion, if admitted, could come up at the next meeting. Adjourning the House till Friday, the Chairman said that if an earlier meeting was desired, members would be notified.

DELHI UNIVERSITY BILL

28th AUGUST :—The Council of State took up the consideration of the Delhi University Bill to-day, as passed by the Central Assembly. The Education member, *Sir Jogindra Singh* making the motion claimed that the fundamental educational principles which found sanction in the Bill had not been challenged ; and the controversy ranged round other aspects which had no direct relation with education. The main object of the Bill and of the reorganisation scheme, he said, was to create in Delhi, the capital city, an All-India University of the first rank, which would set a standard for other universities to follow. Proceeding, *Sir Jogindra Singh* said that the most important feature of the Bill was the three-year degree course. The advantages of such a change were obvious. It would give the high schools a higher standard of scholarship and better qualified teachers ; it would give the universities better prepared and generally more mature students. *Sir Ramunni Menon* strongly opposed the creation of the All-India University at Delhi on the immense scale, which as far as he could gather, was contemplated in the Delhi University scheme, when vast areas of illiteracy remained in India, requiring to be reclaimed. He said

that it would be absolutely unjustifiable to spend the tax-payers' money on what could be characterised as "white elephant in academic robes" in Delhi. Mr. *Hossain Imam* criticised the Government for not circulating the Bill and not referring it to a joint select committee of both the Houses. Mr. *P. N. Saprú* could not complain that the Bill was not timely or opportune. He, however, felt that a prejudice had been created against the Bill from the outset. The Bill did not only give effect to the three-year degree course, but changed the character and the constitution of the University.

31st. AUGUST :—The Council of State passed the Delhi University Bill to-day. Thirty-two amendments were discussed to-day, all of which were rejected by the Council. On the amendment relating to colleges being situated in close proximity to one another and to the University, Mr. *John Sargent* declared that the University would give the most sympathetic consideration to the question of conveyance for non-resident students. Moving that the Bill be passed, *Sir Jogindra Singh* said: "As days pass and a new world takes shape it is my hope that communities in all spheres of life will take their proper share as sons of India". Mr. *P. N. Saprú* stressed the importance of Indian languages and physical education. Mr. *Kalíkar* criticised the lack of provision for migration of students. *Sardar Bahadur Sobha Singh* criticised the attitude of the Muslim League on the Bill. Mr. *Padshah* asserted that the hopes expressed by the Government would not be realised unless the legitimate rights of the minorities were adequately safeguarded in the University. Mr. *Hossain Imam* hoped that the Government would not sleep over the demands of minorities but would soon translate their undertaking into a reality. Pandit *Kunzru* urged that the Government should bring in necessary legislation to give statutory status to the Board of Secondary Education in Delhi. *Sir Jogindra Singh*, winding up the discussion, declared that he had been pleading that the Centre must have control over education and he would do his best to secure funds for education in the country. The Bill was passed.

FOOD SITUATION IN BENGAL

The Council devoted the rest of the afternoon to discussing Pandit *Kunzru's* adjournment motion relating to the Central Government's ban on the publication of Dr. S. P. Mookerji's statement on the food situation in Bengal. Pandit *Kunzru*, making his motion, referred to the recent publication by the '*Statesman*' of pictures of Bengal distress over foodgrains. If the Government of India, he argued, did not desire publication of any news concerning Bengal distress, why did they permit the publication of pictures by the '*Statesman*' which had created deep impression on the minds of the Indian public. Pandit *Kunzru* claimed that Dr. Mookerji's statement was not such as would have created panic in the country. He deplored the lack of uniformity of censorship. Mr. *Kalíkar* was likewise surprised that when photographs were allowed to be published why should the Government have banned the publication of Dr. Mookerji's statement? Mr. *P. N. Saprú* asserted that the Government had not taken any effective step to relieve distress in Bengal. Mr. *Hossain Imam* claimed that the statement of Dr. Mookerji was most improper. Dr. Mookerji tried to make political capital even out of the distress of the people. At the same time he could not condone the Government for letting pictures of Bengal distress be published and ban the publication of the statement. Mr. *S. Roy Chowdhury* and *Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das* further supported the motion. *Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das* asked the Government why were they sleeping after the Burma rice supplies had been cut off. The Government should have preserved rice supplies, instead of exporting it to countries outside India. The Home Secretary, Mr. *Conran Smith*, replying to the debate, referred to members criticising the food policy instead of confining their remarks to the motion before the House. Mr. *Hossain Imam*, for instance, he said had condemned the statement of Dr. Mookerji and at the same time had asked the Government to get out. He did not know which Government he meant.

Mr. *Hossain Imam*: Government of India.

Mr. *Roy Chowdhury*: No. the Bengal Government must get out first.

Referring to Dr. Mookerji's statement, Mr. *Conran-Smith* said that a summary of the statement was put out by the leading news agencies. The Chief Press Adviser, when he saw the full text of the statement, was of the opinion that it contained certain objectionable passages, which exploited the food situation for political purpose. The Chief Press Adviser, therefore, advised the newspapers not to publish the statement outside Bengal. The summary of the statement, however, was published in many newspapers. There were passages in the statement to

which no objection could be taken and it was significant that only such passages were published in two of Bengal papers, namely the '*Hindustan Standard*' and '*Advance*.' Mr. Couran-Smith referred to the "Muslim correspondent of the '*Statesman*,'" who had described the statement as heavily loaded against the Bengal Ministry without any concrete and helpful suggestion for the relief of the Bengal distress. No member of the House, said the Home Secretary, had made any concrete suggestion for the Bengal Relief. Government had no objection to statements being published on the Bengal situation, but in the present times of war, utmost care and restraint was essential for the safety of the country. Nothing should be done to endanger the safety of the country. Mr. *Padshah* did not feel justified to support an attack on the Bengal Ministry. The motion was talked out and the Council adjourned '*sine die*.'

Autumn Session—New Delhi—15 to 24 November 1943

MONETARY HELP TO BENGAL

The autumn session of the Council of State commenced at New Delhi on the 15th. November 1943 and continued till the 24th. November. The President read His Excellency the Viceroy's message to the Legislature. This was in terms similar to the one sent to the Assembly on the opening day. The members of the Progressive and Muslim League parties remained seated.

17th. NOVEMBER:—The Council of State discussed non-official resolutions today. Mr. *Hossain Imam*'s resolution urging a grant of Rs. 1 crore or more to Bengal to meet the present emergency of food shortage occupied the House for the better part of the day. Mr. *Hossain Imam* was supported by Mr. *Padshah*, *Kumar Shankar Roy Chawdhury* and *Rai Bahadur Srinarain*. *Sir A. P. Patro* and Mr. *Dalal* opposed the resolution while Mr. *J. H. Burder* felt that the resolution was premature. Mr. *C. E. Jones*, Finance Secretary, did not agree with Mr. *Hossain Imam* that sympathy with Bengal did not mean anything unless it was accompanied with money. Mr. *Jones* wanted the Council to visualise the effect of pouring money into famine-affected areas of Bengal. It would lead to further inflation, he said. The problem in Bengal was to get on with the job. It would be premature to say that the Centre would step in and meet the deficit in Bengal budget, he said. The resolution was withdrawn.

The Council next passed Mr. *P. N. Saprú*'s resolution asking the Government to keep in view the necessity of finding funds for educational expansion and public health improvement in India. Mr. *Saprú* had originally urged for the building up of a reconstruction fund for the purpose, but when the Government spokesmen, Mr. *C. E. Jones* explained Government difficulties in accepting the principle of making bloc allocations for individual purposes at this juncture, Mr. *Saprú* altered the text of his resolution and the House agreed to pass it in the amended form. The amended resolution instead of advancing a proposal for a reconstruction fund, urged the Government "to keep in view the necessity of finding funds for the purpose".

Before adjournment *Pandit Kunzru* moved his resolution urging the removal of restrictions on the publication of news not relating to the war and in particular news relating to the internal political conditions and the economic well-being of the people.

DEBATE ON THE FOOD SITUATION

19th. NOVEMBER:—The Council of State began the three-day debate on food situation in the country to-day. Mr. *B. R. Sen*, initiating discussion, traced the history of food crisis in Bengal and the steps the Central Government had taken to meet the crisis. The key to the problem in Bengal is not so much what we can send from outside; and under the most favourable conditions we can send only limited quantities compared to the total production which is available within the province; but the extent to which we are able to restore public confidence which has yet to recover from the shocks it had received and get the marketable surplus of the local produce resume its normal flow." On the question of procurement Mr. *Sen* disclosed that the Government of India intend to examine the possibility of establishing central foodgrains monopoly which was recognised to be the only completely satisfactory solution. Meanwhile procurement for domestic requirements and for export must continue to be carried out by Local Government agencies under general supervision. Mr. *Sen* declared that the Government of India were watching with equal care the situation in other seriously deficit areas in India,

such as Travancore, Cochin, Deccan States and Bombay, the Ceded Districts of Madras and the cyclone-affected districts of Orissa and were taking all possible relief measures for them.

Sir A. P. Patro regretted that famine had been made the sport of politics in Bengal. He thought the two parties were fighting for power and the result was that the people were starving. It was a crime to gamble with human lives and the country's safety. He said that the provincial Government having proved inefficient, the military ought to have been requested to assist many months ago.

Sir Sobha Singh said the Bengal famine had exposed the constitutional defects inherent in the Government of India Act 1935. By becoming autonomous units, the provincial Governments had become self-sufficient and insular in their outlook, regardless of the good of the country. He suggested that the greater part of the land under Jute cultivation should be switched over to the rice crop.

Dr. H. N. Kunzru in a speech lasting an hour and a half, gave an account of the scenes he had witnessed in Bengal and Orissa, and observed that if the truth had been told earlier, the situation would not have deteriorated to the extent it did. Whoever had controlled the news about Bengal, had done a very serious injustice to that province. *Dr. Kunzru* emphasised that His Majesty's Government should arrange to supply to India a million and a half tons of foodgrains, as had been suggested in the Gregory Report, and unless that was done, the Gregory plan, he thought, would break down.

Both the Fazlul Haque and Nazimuddin Ministries did not comprehend the magnitude of the calamity that was approaching, said *Dr. Kunzru*. It was clear that up to July the ministers, according to their public statements, did not realise the gravity of the situation. The speaker put the estimate of deaths at much more than 50,000 per week in Bengal alone, and said: "Winter is fast approaching and famished and weakened people, unable to stand exposure to cold, will die in greater numbers, unless immediate steps are taken to provide them with warm clothing." The aman crop, *Dr. Kunzru* hoped, would greatly mitigate suffering, but there were yet two months more before it would be available. He warned that if any attempt was made to purchase a large part of this crop and the people made to feel that the Government were removing the crop to Calcutta or elsewhere, a more serious situation would arise. *Dr. Kunzru* thought that the Government of India would have taken direct and immediate interest in the situation, had famine occurred in the "martial" Punjab. Further, the Bengalis were too quiet and submissive a people. "Had they asserted their will to live, I am sure, their troubles would have been attended to earlier." *Dr. Kunzru* strongly urged the Government to formulate special plans and take special measures to rehabilitate those unfortunate people who had been reduced to beggary. He did not find any reference to this aspect of the problem in the Government statements made so far. He asked the Government to explain what had happened to the proposal of rationing Calcutta. In his opinion all towns in Bengal with a population of 25,000 or over should be rationed. As regards the transport of food into the districts, much more energetic measures had to be taken. There was nothing to indicate that any special effort was being made to co-ordinate various methods of transport and to make full use of the waterways of Bengal. He emphasised the need of bringing down the prices of foodstuffs to the ordinary requirements of villagers and stressed the implementation of the Gregory recommendations with regard to the adequate supply of manure and importation of tractors etc. Turning to the question of provincial autonomy, *Dr. Kunzru* observed, "We have thought too much of the independence of the Provinces and too little of the welfare of the people." The constitutional technicalities should not stand in the way. The question of food supply should be tackled as a whole and no province should be free to deal with it as it likes. He suggested the appointment of an agricultural committee to lay down plans and co-ordinate the efforts of the provincial Governments in carrying them out. He believed in the economic unity of India and unless this unity was maintained, he said "we shall face greater disasters than any hitherto." He asked everyone to take account of the warning that there would be a general food shortage all over the world after the war. Earlier in his speech, *Dr. Kunzru* referred to famine in the other parts of India, namely, Malabar, Travancore, and Orissa, and said that distress in these parts had been overshadowed by the distress in Bengal. He asked the Government of India "to revise the quota exports from Orissa, determine the province's needs sympathetically and adopt measures for the restoration of normal conditions there."

20th. NOVEMBER :—Theoretically, at any rate a country such as India, with a comparatively small percentage of deficit, should not have to rely on other countries for food, certainly not for grain. Either by increasing production or by decreasing consumption, it is our duty to balance our account," declared Mr. R. H. Parker, opening the second day's famine debate to-day. "As it is necessary to plan for years ahead, it is by no means too late for the Government to introduce rationing in Delhi as an example, and I hope that they will do." Referring to the statements in the press and in the Assembly about him as "an honest Briton who has confessed to the crime of hoarding," Mr. Parker pleaded guilty to the accusation of honesty, but not to the crime of hoarding for, the kind of hoarding to which he made reference in the House during the last debate was the very necessary and proper organisation of food supplies for employees. The pity, he said, was that the Government failed to do for the people generally what certain employees did do for their employees.

Mr. M. B. Dalal declared that the only possible short-term method of relieving distress was importation and equitable distribution. He warned the Government that Bombay was not out of danger yet and if there were not sufficient reserve for other provinces, Bombay's fate might be the same as Bengal's. Emphasising the need for increased production in the country, Mr. Dalal urged the formation of something in the nature of a "land army," with modern equipment, to produce more food, and recommended large-scale subsidies to producers.

Mr. P. N. Sapru said the central question was that when it was found that the provinces had their own views in the matter of food, what did the Government of India do to see that its policies were enforced? One could not get away from the fact that the Central Government and Indian members of that Government failed in their duty to inform His Majesty's Government of the real state of affairs. He strongly criticised the Fazlul Haq as well as the Nazimuddin Ministry. The whole story regarding Bengal was one of muddle, bungling and desire to stick to office on the part of everyone concerned, he said.

Mr. Hossain Imam, at this stage, placed before Mr. Sapru a newspaper containing the explanation to which he had referred earlier. Mr. Sapru took the newspaper and flung it impatiently aside, whereupon Mr. Hossain Imam excitedly explained, "This attitude of mind is responsible for India's slavery."

Mr. Sapru went on to declare that it was not speeches but action that would make the Moslem League Party respected. He emphasised that for a considerable period, the Food Department was under the control of Lord Linlithgow and it is a strange commentary that the Viceroy did not visit Bengal, Mr. Sapru supposed that Lord Linlithgow's desire probably was that his successor might get credit for having done what he did not do himself, because on the political side there was not much to be expected.

Mr. V. V. Kaliker thought that the present calamity in Bengal has occurred on account of mal-administration by the provincial Government, inaction on the part of the Government of India and neglect of the British Government. Mr. Kaliker urged that if surplus provinces did not carry out the policies of the Government of India, they should be forced to do so, and for this purpose, even amendments should be made in the Government of India Act. Confidence in Bengal could only be restored if there was a coalition ministry in that province, representative of all groups and parties, as had been suggested by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee.

The Maharaja of Darbhanga complained that people connected with agriculture had never been consulted seriously and Government always looked to the West and not to this country for curing India's ills. Government experiments, he said, had been signal failures. He emphasised the need of making full use of the administrative machinery of the landlords, which keeps close and direct touch with the cultivators. These indigenous agencies would be much more efficient than Government officials, both in the matter of procurement and distribution. He trusted that Government would stop pumping out paper currency into the country and adopt fiscal devices to check inflation.

Mr. Gopalaswamy Aiyengar severely criticised the mortality statistics in Bengal and claimed that even if the figure of 58,000 cited by the Food Member were correct, it was too staggering a figure for the country. He referred to past famines in one of which he himself was an administrative officer and said that arrangements were such that not a single life was lost on account of starvation. It was an administrative scandal of the first magnitude and should be thoroughly probed.

Sir Buta Singh said that requisitioning in a province like the Punjab would definitely do more harm than good and, if compulsion were employed, the food-grains would disappear again. *Sir Buta Singh* said : "The impression is growing that the financial policy of the Government of India is to deprive the cultivators of their legitimate dues, that it is anti-industrial and the development of industry has been choked in the name of deflation. The impression is gaining strength and may have serious repercussions.

The Agriculture Member, *Sir Jogendra Singh* dwelt on the progress of the "Grow More Food" campaign. The Agriculture Member claimed that the cultivated land was already over-crowded and "salvation of India lay in diverting at least" 30 per cent of rural population to industries. This brought him to the question of industrialisation, for which purpose, he said, it was necessary that there should be a rise in the purchasing power of the masses. He agreed that there should be an all-India plan for education and agriculture, but constitutional difficulties stood in the way of the Centre dictating to provinces on those subjects. The whole thing, he claimed, depended on money and they should do their best to make money more productive. He warned the house that the foundation of life in India rested on agriculture for which planning was urgently needed. He argued for constructive programme for agriculture in this country.

Mr. M. L. Das dwelt on conditions in Assam, which, he said, were acute. He urged that the Government of India should take the situation in Assam into serious consideration and take steps to give relief. *Mr. Padshah* supported the amendment asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into all the allegations and charges and counter-charges hurled by different bodies and persons. The House then adjourned.

23rd. NOVEMBER :—On the third day of the debate, *Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava*, Food Member, referring to the demand for enquiry, reiterated his statement made in the Assembly that the Government could not accede to the proposal at the present time. He was prepared to accept the amendment tabled by *Mr. Parker*. The Food Member said : "We have been in closest consultation with the Government of Bengal on their 'Aman' procurement scheme and we have come to the following conclusions :—Although there is in prospect a very large crop, it may be that fear for the future will operate to influence cultivators to hold on their stocks and not bring them freely to market. We consider, therefore, that one of our primary objects in dealing with this matter should be to endeavour to re-establish confidence in the countryside that no undue demand going to be made on the cultivators own necessary supplies. To this end, we propose to reduce to the minimum the amount which the Government procurement agency will be forced to procure in the early stages of the season and for that reason we propose to continue the importation of foodgrains into Bengal in quantities equivalent to the requirements of Calcutta. Supplies to deficit districts will be made by linking traders in the deficit district for the purpose of procurement of specific quotas from surplus districts. It will, therefore, remain for the Government purchasing agency to procure only requirements of essential services outside Calcutta, of any rationed areas outside Calcutta, and a certain quantity for a provincial reserve to meet emergent demand. The Government procurement organization will, in effect, exert no undue pressure on the market. The main danger to the success of such a system is speculative buying. This is proposed to be controlled by rigorous reinforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order and the control of movement. The Government of Bengal intend to encourage the cultivator to bring his surplus to the market by a widespread propaganda campaign and every endeavour will also be made to make available in the rural areas greater supply of consumers goods.

Referring to rehabilitation of distress areas, the Food Member, pressing his personal views said : "We must be prepared to assist these people, in case of necessity, with loans or gratuitous help in securing cattle, utensils, clothing and implements for their livelihood." As for rationing in Delhi, *Sir Jwala Prasad* said that they had already taken up the question, and their rationing adviser had consultations with the Delhi authorities. It was their intention to introduce rationing on full scale in this city, from the Viceroy downwards, as soon as the scheme could be prepared and put into execution.

Mr. Hossain Imam would not like to make political capital out of Bengal's tragedy. Framing his charge sheet for the present Bengal crisis, he placed the Bengal press in the forefront and accused it for not disclosing the correct facts till the League Ministry came into office. Then it was too late, he said. *Mr. Imam* charged *Faiz-ul-Huq-Mookerji* combine, with conspiracy of silence and for

mishandling the situation. He coupled the Governor of Bengal with them for not disclosing the real facts of the Bengal situation. He said that the Governor of Bengal had full facts before him and he should have known what was in store for Bengal. Mr. N. R. Sarkar, the first Food Member also, he said, joined the conspiracy of silence. Lastly, he criticised the conduct of the person who held the food portfolio after Mr. Sircar had resigned. Proceeding, he criticised the Transport Department, which had failed to secure ships even on the Indian water. Some of these ships, he alleged, were plying for pilgrim traffic between Egypt and Arabia, instead of carrying food for this country.

Pandit Kunzru : What about the part played by the present ministry from May to July? The present Ministry took steps to prevent newspapers from publishing news about Bengal.

Mr. Hossain Imam : "I will deal with that in my own time." He asserted that the storm broke up on April 24 when the present ministry took office. Proper signals were given to start all sorts of propaganda to discredit the ministry. Mr. Hossain Imam wanted the House to stand up with him against any attack on provincial autonomy. He claimed that the recent orders under Section 126 A on the Sind Government to maintain its price control was an attack on provincial autonomy.

Mr. P. N. Sapru : "Why does not the Sind Government resign on that issue?"

Mr. Hossain Imam : "We stick to our guns. You resigned and now you come before the Government begging for the release of your leaders. We are more realistic."

Pandit Kanzru : "You stick to offices."

Making his concrete suggestions, *Mr. Hossain Imam* said that the price of agricultural products should not be fixed arbitrarily. The Government should fix only floor and ceiling prices and leave exact determination of prices to the provinces. Furthermore, the price fixation by the centre should be done in consultation with the interests concerned. The Central Government should also disclose its own procurement plans. Lastly he wanted a reduction in acreage under jute cultivation and a cess to improve irrigation in Western Bengal.

Rai Bahadur Ramsarandas wanted to know why the consignments of foodgrains to India were stopped in last summer. Referring to the Punjab, he said that the prices had risen there because the Government failed to import foodgrains. Regarding the "grow-more-food" campaign, he regretted that while the campaign was on, the agricultural implements and cattle had become scarce. He urged that the Government should take land revenue both in cash and kind and the Government should speed up imports of foodgrains into India.

Mr. B. R. Sen, winding up the debate, denied the allegations that to meet the needs of Bengal the interests of the people of certain districts of Orissa, affected by cyclone, had been sacrificed. He said that the most hopeful aspect of the local situation was the bumper "Aman" crop, the harvesting of which had already commenced. Referring to the army purchases, *Mr. Sen* said that the total requirements of the defence services amounted to 6,51,000 tons a year, of which wheat constituted 5,00,000 tons and rice 1,50,000 tons. In other words the requirements of the defence services amounted to only 1.2 per cent of the total production of foodgrains of India. It was not a net addition to the demand on Indian resources. The Indian soldier would have eaten even if he remained in the village, though as a soldier he might eat a little more. *Mr. Sen* dwelt on the four principal recommendations of the Gregory report. They were the basic plan, procurement, statutory price control and rationing. *Mr. Sen*, referring to the basic plan said that they would, in a few days, be sending out a more firm statement of the provisional Khariff plan. As for procurement, they had been scrutinising procurement scheme prepared by the local Governments. Referring to rationing, *Mr. Sen* explained that in the Madras Presidency rationing was already in force in the Madras City, Malabar, Salem, Coimbatore, Saidapet and Vizagapatam, and was contemplated in the Nilgiris, and Tinnevely. In the Bengal Presidency the rationing schemes were already in operation in Dacca, Faridpur, Serajgunj. In Calcutta and the surrounding industrial areas rationing would be introduced in the very near future. In Bihar it had been decided to introduce rationing as soon as possible in no less than fifteen of the main towns and industrial areas in Bihar. In Sind arrangements were complete for the introduction of rationing in Karachi. In U. P. rationing of up to 60 per cent of the population of all larger towns was already in operation. It was intended that the scheme at present in force should be expanded to cover 100 per

cent of the urban population in the near future. In the Delhi Province it was the intention of the Government of India to introduce rationing in Delhi City in the near future. In Orissa rationing was already in force in Cuttack and Sambalpur. In Assam certain articles not including rice, were rationed in Shillong. In the C.P. in Nagpur an incomplete rationing scheme was already in force. In the N.-W.-F.P. rationing was in force in Peshawar. In Baluchistan Quetta-Pishin was a rationed area. The information available regarding rationing in the Indian States was also incomplete, but rationing was in force in Cochin, Travancore, Indore, Bhopal, Gwalior, Junagadh, Dewas, Cutch, Rajkot, Vithal-Gadh State. In Mysore rationing was to be introduced in both urban and rural areas. Mr. Sen also disclosed that the question of price control in the Punjab had been engaging their close attention.

The Council adopted Mr. Parker's amendment by 24 votes against 19 and adjourned. Mr. Parker's amendment runs as follows: "And at a suitable date an enquiry should take place to examine the whole question of the food shortage in India and in particular in Bengal. The enquiry should be conducted by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission and its personnel should be completely outside the field of Indian politics. Its terms of reference should cover a full examination of the present food shortage and the making of recommendations to prevent the recurrence of the existing distress."

MODIFICATION OF CRIPPS PROPOSALS

24th. NOVEMBER :—The Council of State to-day adopted Mr. G. S. Motilal's resolution, recommending the Government to convey a request to His Majesty's Government to modify the Cripps proposals so as to make them acceptable to the people of India.

CHARGES AGAINST DETENUS

The Home Member started on Pandit H. N. Kunzru's resolution asking for revision of cases by High Court judges and furnishing detenus with charges against them. that the Government would be able to announce within a month their decision regarding the furnishing of charges against detenus. The matter was under the active consideration of the Government. He was not opposed to the examination of cases by advisory committees but said that it was not difficult to constitute such committees which would consist of men of both judicial and executive experience. The Council at this stage adjourned '*sine die*.'

The Central Legislative Assembly

Monsoon Session—New Delhi—26th. July to 25th. August, 1943

The Central Legislative Assembly began its monsoon session at New Delhi on the 26th July 1943 with Sir Abdul Rahim, President, in the chair. Sir Azizul Haque, Sir A. K. Roy and Dr. N. B. Khare, the three new members of the Executive Council took the oath amid cheers.

16 ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS FAIL

Sixteen adjournment motions fell through, some being disallowed by the Chair, one by the Governor-General, and one for want of a sufficient number of supporters, while a large number relating to food were dropped in view of Sir Azizul Haque's announcement that a day would be given to the discussion of the food situation as a whole. Dr. Khare, Indian Overseas Member, also announced that a day would be set aside for discussion of the situation arising from the South African Pegging Act. Mr. Govind Deshmukh's adjournment motion on the same subject was therefore withdrawn.

Among motions disallowed by the Chair was one by Sardar Sant Singh who sought to discuss Government's refusal to forward Mahatma Gandhi's letter to Mr. Jinnah. The Home Member objecting to the motion pointed out that a similar motion was discussed in the last session when Government's policy with regard to correspondence with Mr. Gandhi was explained and it was stated that this policy had been in existence for a considerable time. The subject of the present motion

was therefore not a new or urgent matter. The Chair held that the motion did not raise any new or urgent matter. The Chair announced that the Governor-General had disallowed the same member's motion to discuss the Government of India's refusal to permit Mr. *Phillips* to meet Mr. *Gandhi*.

RECIPROCITY ACT AMEND. BILL

Among official Bills introduced was one by Dr. *N. B. Khare* to amend the Reciprocity Act of 1943, in order that an Act, which it is pointed out is virtually unworkable in practice, may be made effective and in order to carry out the intention of the legislature in passing that Act. The issue of a notification under the Act does not automatically cut down rights and privileges enjoyed in India by persons domiciled in the notified British possession. No provision is made in the Act for the breach of any directions or obligations imposed under any rules which might be framed under the Act. The amending Bill seeks to remove these defects.

OTHER OFFICIAL BILLS INTRODUCED

Sir Jeremy Raisman, Finance Member, introduced a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Government securities issued by the Central Government and to the management of the Reserve Bank of India of the Public Debt of the Central Government.

Dr. *Ambedkar* introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Boilers Act and a Bill to amend the Motor Vehicles (drivers) Ordinance and a Bill to amend the Mines Maternity Benefit Act.

Mr. *C. M. Trivedi*, War Secretary, introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Army Act and the Indian Air Force Act, and Mr. *J. D. Tyson*, Education Secretary, a Bill to amend the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act. *Sir A. K. Roy*, Law Member, introduced a Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The House agreed to *Sir A. K. Roy's* motion to refer to a Select Committee the Bill to make certain provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by a High Court exercising original criminal jurisdiction.

AIR RAIDS ON INDIA

Replying to a question by Mr. *A. N. Chattopadhyaya*, Mr. *N. V. H. Symons*, Civil Defence Secretary, said that between April 2 and June 26 this year, there were seven enemy air raids on British India and three on Indian States. All the raids on British India were directed against military targets in SE Bengal. The number of civilian casualties in these raids on British India was 110, the number of wounded being 32. Damages to property was negligible. Neither casualties nor desertion among the ARP services had been reported from Bengal, Assam and Orissa as a result of recent raids. Full ARP measures were in force and no special measures were necessary. In the industrial areas of Bengal, as elsewhere in India, where the civil defence services have been put to the test in recent months, they have given complete satisfaction. Replying to Mr. *Lalchand Navalrai*, he announced that the Government would be glad to arrange for the discussion of the war situation at a secret meeting to be held during the current session, when a full statement on the war situation would be made by the C-in-C, if the President issued directions similar to those issued in connexion with previous secret sessions.

The War Secretary, Mr. *C. M. Trivedi*, revealed that during these raids 16 Japanese aircraft were destroyed and eight probably destroyed while six. Allied aircraft were reported missing, the pilots of two being safe. Military damage caused by these raids was negligible.

INDIAN PRISONERS IN JAPANESE HANDS

The number of Indian personnel so far notified as being prisoner-of-war in Japanese hands was 1270, said *Sir Phiroze Khan Noon*, Defence Member, replying to a question by Mr. *Bhutto*. Indian personnel numbering 68,490 were still unaccounted for and it was believed that the majority of them were prisoners of war in Japanese hands. It was not in the public interest to disclose the number of Japanese prisoners of war in India. Very little information, he added, had been received regarding the treatment of Indian prisoners of war in Japanese hands. Such information as was available indicated that in many cases prisoners captured by the Japanese had been most brutally treated.

NUMBER OF DETENUS

The Home Member, replying to Mr. *Govind Deshmukh*, revealed that the total number of persons in detention under Rule 26 of the DI Rules on June 1, 1943 was 11,717, excluding the NWFP for which figures were not available. As regards conditions of detention and release, he said that the Government of India were concerned only with security prisoners detained in the Chief Commissioners provinces while each provincial Government was empowered to determine the conditions under which security prisoners should be detained in that province. The power to direct the release of security prisoners lay with the authority directing arrest and detention. In the case of a security prisoner detained under the orders of the provincial Government full discretion rested with that provincial Government.

Mr. *L. K. Moitra* asked if there were any fresh cases of detention under DI Rule 26 following the Federal Court's judgment on it. The Home Member replied that there had been some cases of detention subsequent to the amendment of the DI Rules.

TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

27th, JULY.—*Sardar Mangal Singh*, Congress Member from the Punjab, spoke on Mr. *T. T. Krishnamachari's* resolution asking for a revision of Government policy with regard to treatment of political prisoners and detenus. He described the treatment of prisoners of the 1942 civil disobedience movement which he alleged was worse than that of prisoners of war in India and that of detenus in India before 1942. He supported the resolution. Pandit *Nilkanta Das* was confident that, if responsible persons were permitted contact with Congressmen in jails, many of the latter would come out to assist in easing the present situation. He asked for a revision of the whole policy in view of the improved war situation. Mr. *Govind Deshmukh* moved an amendment seeking to delete reference to political detenus since Aug. 1942 from the text of the resolution. He said that when a meeting of Liberals in London demanded better treatment for political prisoners and detenus in India, they looked at the question from a more humanitarian point of view, and he wanted the Government of India to approach the question from the same point of view. Mr. *Neogy* asked if the Home Member was perfectly satisfied that the alterations he had made for "preventive and precautionary purposes" in the treatment to be meted out to political prisoners after 1942 were being worked rightly in the provinces. All sorts of allegations had been made, for instance, in the Punjab Assembly, but not a single one had been refused by the Government. *Sardar Sant Singh* criticized the Defence of India Rules. From the number of ordinances made in the Act it was apparent that it was being used for purposes far beyond those for which it was meant. He asked the Government not to look at every case from the police point of view and not to assume that every Indian was guilty and was out to hamper war effort. He asked the Government Member to accept Mr. *Joshi's* demand for a Committee of the Legislature to revise Government's policy or to appoint their own Advisory Committee. *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali*, Deputy Leader, Muslim League Party, declared that so far as the demand for humane and decent treatment of detenus and political prisoners was concerned, the Muslim League Party had the fullest sympathy, but there were occasions when Government might in the larger interests of the country take some action which in its judgment was necessary to preserve the peace. That, however, was no reason why such persons should not be treated as decent human beings. *Sir Reginald Maxwell*, Home Member, winding up the debate, said he could almost have accepted the resolution as amended by Mr. *Deshmukh* but for the words in Mr. *Joshi's* amendment. "In consultation with a Committee of the Legislature specially appointed for the purpose, the Central Government and the Legislature, he declared, could not step in and supersede Provincial Governments in matters in the provincial field. He, however, stated that, since the last debate on the subject Government had not been idle; they had been in correspondence with Provincial Governments and as a result Provincial Governments had been reviewing cases of persons detained under Rule 26 and a total of 4,623 persons detained had been released by these Governments themselves. A great deal of correspondence had also been undertaken by the Central Government with Provincial Governments to secure uniformity of conditions and there had been considerable improvement in certain Provinces in matters of freedom of correspondence and interviews. Correspondence with Provincial Governments also showed that security prisoners received substantially better treatment than convicted persons.

Mr. *Joshi's* amendment was rejected by the President's casting vote and the resolution with Mr. *Deshmukh's* amendment was negatived by 41 votes to 38.

CIVIC RIGHTS FOR HARIJANS

28th. JULY :—Full social and civic rights for Harijans, the right of Indians to possess firearms and a monthly salary for members of the Central Legislature were sought to be secured by three non-official Bills introduced in the Assembly to-day. The first Bill, introduced by Mr. *A. N. Chattopadhyaya*, provides, among other things, that no court recognize any civic or social disabilities imposed by custom on Harijans and that the words "backward class," "depressed class," "untouchables," "harijans" and "scheduled class" be removed from usage. The right to possess firearms and other weapons was proposed to be given to Indians in general and Hindus in particular by a Bill introduced by *Pandit Nilkanta Das*.

OTHER NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

A monthly salary of Rs. 500 for members of the Central Legislature was proposed in another Bill by *Pandit Nilkanta Das*. He pointed out that the present method of remunerating members by means of a daily allowance was unsatisfactory as a member's income varies from session to session according to its length.

The house agreed to Dr. *N. B. Khare's* motion that *Moulvi Abdul Ghani's* Bill further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act be circulated for eliciting opinion till Oct 15. The Bill sought to increase from Rs. 1 to Rs. 3 the daily compensatory allowance given by a shipping company to each cabin class Haj pilgrim who held a return ticket and was detained at Jeddah for more than 25 days because the shipping company had not provided him with accommodation in a pilgrim ship.

Mr. *Kazmi* introduced a number of bills to amend the Civil and Criminal Procedure Codes and a Bill to make it clear that prosecution for an offence committed under the Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Act can only take place in a town or district where such publication were first printed or the author of a book or document usually resides.

RECIPROCITY ACT AMEND. BILL

29th. JULY :—The Assembly to-day passed the first reading of Dr. *Khare's* Bill to amend the Reciprocity Act, so as to make it more effective in application. Further stages of the Bill were postponed in order to give time to members to consider amendments which were received late. Moving consideration of the Bill, Dr. *Khare*, member for Indians Overseas, said the original Act had been found defective and, as it stood, it was virtually unworkable in practice. Under its provisions, the rights and privileges enjoyed in India by persons domiciled in a notified British possession could not be cut down, nor was there any provision by which penalties for breach of directions could be imposed. His amending legislation would remove those defects and make the Bill effective for the purpose for which it was enacted.

Sir Syed Raza Ali, India's former Agent-General in S. Africa, said the Bill had not come up a minute too soon. Dr. *Khare* had acted in a reasonable manner, both as an Indian and as a Member of the Government, specially when he called a representative meeting of public men to consider the situation arising out of the "pegging" legislation. He, however, protested against what he called Government's attempt to find scapegoats by saying that the Act was defective whereas everybody had considered it workable at the time it was passed, and the Indian Overseas's secretary had described it as a measure that was to be administered with care. Mr. *Hooseinbhai Laljee* said that the House must acknowledge it was the first time that Government had risen to the occasion. The people of India wanted a full expression of its strong resentment at what F-M Smuts' Government were doing. *Sir Frederick James* said it was a tragedy that the House should be asked to enact a Bill with the intention of applying, as a retaliatory measure, those forms of discrimination in this country which were unfortunately imposed on Indians in other parts of the Empire. *Sir Cowasji Jehangir* said that the only effective way to make S. Africa wake up was trade retaliation, but trade retaliation was a weapon which would do more damage to the thousands of Indians in S. Africa than to the hundred S. African resident in India. During the debate, Dr. *Khare* granted that if the Bill was passed it was not going to make any impression on S. Africa. He also said that

retaliation was not a permanent solution of the problem. But when conciliation, consultation, negotiation and representation failed, what other remedy was left? He gave credit to Government for their promptitude in bringing the amending Bill so soon after the defects in the original Act were discovered.

OTHER OFFICIAL BILLS

The House adopted three Bills moved by the Labour Member, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. One further amends the Indian Boilers Act 1923, and provides for the inspection of the boiler-fed water system; the second amends the Mines Maternity Benefit Act, 1941 to ensure that women receive maternity benefit for every day, except those on which they attend work and receive payment, during the days of confinement; and third, amends the Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Ordinance, 1942, providing for the reinstatement of requisitioned drivers, on the termination of compulsory service under the ordinance, in their former employment on the same terms as before, and safeguarding the position of a driver, about to do a called up for service, who is dismissed by his employer in order to evade the liability to reinstate him.

Mr. J. D. Tyson's Bill further to amend the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937, and Mr. C. M. Trivedi's Bill further to amend the Indian Army Act 1911, and the Indian Air Force Act 1932, were also passed. The Assembly adjourned.

ATTACK ON MR. JINNAH

30th. JULY :—A resolution condemning the cowardly attack on Mr. Jinnah and congratulating him on his providential escape was passed in the Assembly to-day. Leaders of all parties and Sir Sultan Ahmed, Leader of the House, associated themselves with the motion.

SOUTH AFRICAN PEGGING LEGISLATION

Dr N. B. Khare, Member for Indians Overseas, initiated the discussion on the South African "pegging" legislation. "After tracing the history of Indo-South African relations, he said that from the earliest days of Indian immigration into Natal, the White population of South Africa had been guided by no other motive but "gross self-interest." By passes, licences, registration, taxes, tests, and reservations regarding property and trading, and by denying the elementary right of the franchise to people born and bred in their country, the Government of South Africa have done their utmost to humiliate and hedge in their Indian population. To this has been added social and public indignity of many kinds. "The constitutional drawback from which India suffers does not detract from the inherent justice of the case of Indians in South Africa and some means must be found for maintaining the dignity and prestige of India and of the Government of India, even in wartime. Fortunately in this matter the people of India and the Government of India are at one and the latter have already publicly characterized the recent legislation as repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune. Had India been independent she would have considered this a "casus belli" against South Africa. But we must not think lightly of breaking away from the British Commonwealth of Nations because the ideal of co-operative inter-dependence on a footing of equality is better than the ideal of isolated independence. There may be also a forlorn hope of representations yielding valuable results after the election fever in South Africa has cooled down. But representations unbacked by any action, is valueless. As for action, an amended Reciprocity Act is already before the house for consideration and the possibility of applying other feasible and proper measures is being carefully examined." Sir Henry Richardson supported the Government of India's declaration that the Union Government's legislation, giving statutory recognition to racial discriminatory policy, was repugnant, unnecessary and inopportune. He said that whatever reasons might have inspired the Union Government in this action, he could not agree with those who felt that it indicated a lack of appreciation of the great part which India had played, and was playing, in the war and he hoped that no political considerations would be permitted to cloud the issue. Suggesting trade retaliation, enforcement of the Reciprocity Act against Union Nationals in India and the recall of the Indian High Commissioner from South Africa, Sir Sayed Raza Ali, India's former Agent-General in South Africa, said that it was a lame excuse to say that Indians were penetrating extensively into predominantly European areas. The Government of India had to do something, and he suggested that immediate sanctions should be imposed to prevent export of foodgrains and gunnybags from India and refuse the import of wattle bark and paints, etc., from South Africa. He also urged on the Government to impose restrictions on South African nationals

in this country within the next two months, and to recall the Indian High Commissioner. Dr. Banerjee advocated a rigorous application of the provisions of the Reciprocity Act, notice to terminate the Trade Agreement between India and South Africa, an examination of the articles by which he could prevent import and export, recall of both the High Commissioner and the Trade Commissioner, and lastly a common non-European front. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan held that HMG had not played fair to India. If they had exerted any pressure, he was sure, the South African Government would have stayed their hands. He asserted that the war could not be made an excuse for delaying any action. "War or no war we want action at once: action to uphold the dignity and honour of Indians wherever they may be." Dr. Khare, winding up the debate, announced that he had called a meeting of the Standing Emigration Committee for August 7 when he hoped to place his proposals for its consideration.

The Assembly passed the motion, with Mr. Deshmukh's amendment, which read as follows: "The position arising out of the recent 'pegging' legislation in South Africa be taken into consideration with a view to enforce the Reciprocity Act and adopt measures to redress the grievances of Indians in South Africa."

H. E. THE VICEROY'S ADDRESS

2nd. AUGUST :—Crowded galleries and a full House listened to the Viceroy's address, which lasted an hour-and-a-quarter and was frequently cheered, particularly the passages in which he paid a tribute to India's defence forces and to the Indian Press.

"From the very beginning of the war I have done everything a man could do to bring the Indian political parties and their leaders together, to remove doubts as to the intentions of HMG regarding India's future, to achieve that sufficiency of common agreement between the parties and communities of this country and that necessary preliminary acceptance of the legitimate claims of all that must be the pre-condition of any constitutional advance that is worth having, or that can hope for permanence", declared Lord Linlithgow in his farewell address to the Central Legislature today.

He added: "It will always be a sharp disappointment to me that these four, years of war should, for all that effort, have seen us no nearer our goal, and that as I speak today, these internal divisions and these communal rivalries and that reluctance to place India first and subordinate sectional ambitions and jealousy to the common interests of the country should still stand in the way of progress.

"I regret the more that at a time when India's contribution to the war effort has been so great, when in so many ways her stature has been so enhanced, greater progress should not have been possible in the constitutional field during these years of war. That there has been no greater progress is due not to lack of effort or enthusiasm or goodwill on the part of HMG or myself.

"As I have said elsewhere, those divisions and that lack of agreement are due not to reluctance of HMG to transfer power to Indian hands, but to their very readiness to do so. But the fact, the lamentable fact, remains, that, to the grief of all of us, those divisions exist. Nor during all that time has a single constructive proposition—and I deeply regret to say it—been put forward by any Indian party. The whole burden of framing constructive proposals in relation either to an interim or final solution has been left to HMG and myself.

"We for our part, most anxious to give all the help we could, have tried one proposal after another, and we have done our best to harmonize the sharply conflicting claims that have faced us. The best that we can devise, informed as we are by centuries of experience of parliamentary Government, has been freely offered. Yet, while one endeavour after another by HMG to find a solution fair to all parties and communities in India and acceptable to India as a whole has been rejected by one party or the other, not one such practicable alternative proposal has been put forward by any one in this country."

Narrating the efforts made by him to secure Constitutional advance in the centre and in the provinces, he said: "If I have not been able to achieve the measure of success I had hoped for, I at any rate, during the time of war, have been able to bring into being changes of real significance and far-reaching importance. It is true that I have not been able to persuade the great political parties to take their share in the Government of the country, but the Government of India, a body of seven of which the majority were officials, has been changed into a body of 14, eleven of which are non-officials and four only, including the C-in-C, are Europeans. Of its broad basis, of the representation it gives to the various

communities and interests, of the equality of its members, there can be no question whatever.

"Such changes cannot be a substitute for a Constitution determined by ordinary processes and agreement—processes which cannot be completed under the stress of war. Short cuts can only be a danger alike to present unity and post-war solutions. At the stage now reached the real problem to be faced is the future problem: we must look forward, and not backward. And it is the need for India herself to find a solution. That in all friendliness and sincerity I would most earnestly commend to your consideration today. I have said it before, and I say it again quite plainly that the path to full and honourable co-operation with the Government of the country has always been open to those who desire it for its own sake. HMG and the Viceroy can try to help as they have tried in the past. But the burden is on India, on her leaders, on the principal elements in her national life. It is discordance between those principal elements, lack of trust, lack of readiness to accept the legitimate claims of the minorities of the parties, or interests that stand in the way.

Those are obstacles that only Indians can remove. And it is most important, and I would most earnestly urge this on you, that if there is to be any progress Indian public men should without delay, start to get together and clear the way for it. The post-war phase is drawing rapidly nearer. HMG, as you will remember, have voiced the hope that on the conclusion of the war Indians themselves may sit round the table and hammer out a Constitution having the general support of all the principal elements in India's national life. Are India's leaders to be found unprepared when the day comes for those discussions? Is it not the course of wisdom to sit to work at once without wasting a day, to try by discussion between themselves to find in readiness for those discussions an accommodation of differences that prevent progress at the moment and build a bridge over the profound gulfs that divide party from party and community from community?

They alone can do it. The burden is on them and not on HMG. And the whole field is open to them. If the proposals which HMG have at one time or the other put forward in default of any proposals from Indian leaders are unacceptable to India as a whole, there is nothing to stop India's leaders from considering and devising an alternative, whatever its nature, or from trying by private negotiation with other parties in this country to secure their support for any such alternative. All I would say—and I say it again as a friend of India and as one concerned to see her progress in whatever manner is best suited to her national genius and the interests of all within her borders—is this, that whatever alternative and whatever scheme is devised must take into account practical considerations and must have the general support of all the important elements in Indian national life.

"No scheme, however good it may look on paper, that ignores important elements or interests, that overlooks the essential necessity for substantial agreement inside India as its basis has any hope of surviving for long. A National Government can be a reality only if it is generally representative, if it has general support of the major parties and the people as a whole, if its establishment leads to the assuaging of communal and other bitterness and rivalry and to the harmonising of all the many divergent points of view that a country such as India with its great range of climate and races, its different historical traditions must always present.

"In Field-Marshal Viscount Wavell India will have as Viceroy one who has proved himself through a long and glorious career as one of the great leaders of men in the field and one of the outstanding soldiers of our time, but you will find in him also, and this I can say from personal experience of two years of close, intimate and friendly collaboration, an understanding, wise and sagacious statesman, a man of sound political sense and judgment, a leader of courage and tenacity whose wide human sympathy, whose affection for India and whose profound interest in her problems are well known. In the difficult days that lie ahead—for the problems of peace are no less exhausting and complex than the problems we have had to face in the war—his ripe experience, his fresh up-to-date knowledge of India and his sincerity and openness of mind will be of value to this country. That cannot be overstated."

Reviewing his term of office, he said: "The 7½ years of my Viceroyalty have lain in momentous times. Through the whole period we have been faced by political issues of the first importance. For the last four years there has been 'the

dominating need to concentrate on India's defence against hostile attack; on the expansion and training of our armed forces whether naval, military or air, and on organizing our war effort in terms of men, money and supplies. India's response to every call made on her throughout the war has been magnificent. She may well be proud of the superb contribution she has made to the victories of the Allies and the triumph of the United Nation.

"The recent legislation in S Africa affecting the status of Indians in that country has been a matter of profound regret to my Government and the situation which results therefrom is under active consideration.

"In other fields India's international status has been enhanced in a variety of ways. She is represented in Washington and Chungking. China and the President of the U. S. are represented here. For over a year now she had representation on the War Cabinet. She has been very closely associated with all developments of importance in connexion with the war. The splendid work of her fighting men whether by sea, land or in the air has added to her renown throughout the world. The magnitude of her contribution to the war effort of the Allies is known to every one."

Referring to the development of nation-building activities by the carrying out of carefully-considered Government schemes for the establishment of new factories or the expansion of existing ones, and by the operation of private enterprise, he said: "In particular the Chatfield and Ministry of Supply Mission projects for new ordnance factories and expansion of old ones are now either completed or nearly complete. I may also mention the great expansions in the steel industry, in the manufacture of machine tools, in the chemical industry, and in the capacity of the rubber manufacturing industry, especially for making tyres.

"Those results have not been easy to achieve in the face of the difficulties, known to all of you, which arose and still arise from the growing claims on the shipping resources of the Allies, from the closure of certain sources of raw material by the tide of Japanese aggression, and from the pressure on India's internal transport system arising from the greatly increased burden of war production and military movements. In solving these difficulties, and in maintaining its war effort despite them, India has received and is receiving the greatest help from the other Allied nations, especially from HMG and from the USA. The Technical Mission which our American allies sent us last year, and the Lease-Lend Mission now with us, have been of the greatest assistance to us. We have lately had a joint Anglo-American Steel Mission which gave valuable advice and help in connexion with the production and distribution of steel, and I must pay a cordial tribute to the admirable work of the Eastern Group Supply Council, itself the outcome of the Eastern Group Conference, for the initiation of which India was so largely responsible and which did such invaluable work.

"This vast expansion in the field of war productions has not been achieved without material sacrifice of the goods ordinarily available to the agriculturist and the townsman. I will refer later to certain aspects of that problem. But I am glad to think that many of the industries engaged in the manufacture of vital war supplies are now better equipped to produce goods for ordinary internal consumption than they were before; the experience gained in manufacture under the stress of war adds materially to our knowledge of modern skill and technique; and we are extracting and putting to use in India more and more of our own raw materials. Over and above this realizing the importance of providing for essential civil needs we are now endeavouring to release for civil consumption a larger share of the industrial output of our own resources. The steps we have already taken in this direction will be steadily pursued, consistently with our responsibility for supplying the armed forces in India.

For the moment and for some time to come, our energies must be devoted to exploiting all available resources for waging war. But the moment will arrive when this process must be reversed, and our efforts will be directed again towards the normal activities of peace and the use and development of those resources for the rehabilitation of our economy and the maintenance, and wherever possible, the improvement of the standards of living of our people. Post-war reconstruction is a phrase familiar today in every continent, but the nature of this reconstruction must depend upon local condition and the vicissitudes of battle.

"In some countries the rebuilding of the bomb-shattered homes of the people and of the factories in which they earn their livelihood must be the first stage of recovery. Then again a nation the greater part of whose adult population of both sexes has been conscripted into the fighting services or war industry has to

face problems vastly different, at least in degree, from those which confront us here in India, where despite the magnitude of Our war effort, large section of the population still pursue their customary avocations more or less undisturbed by the tide of the war save in so far as changes in the price level may have affected their lot for better or for worse.

"Our own problems in this field, vital though they are, are of a different order. War has brought to India a marked and significant increase in industrial activity and an even more important increment in the number of persons skilled in mechanical and industrial work of all kinds. Evidently the problem is to carry forward after the war as much as we may of this enhanced industrial activity, transmuted betimes from its present warlike shape into forms capable of producing the needs of a world at peace. Certain of our industries, some of them highly important, have come through the past four years with few changes of a technical character, and for such the problems to be solved will be mainly of a commercial character.

"Closely linked with industrial expansion are the problems of agricultural improvement. The best hope of permanent progress, whether in town or countryside, lies in the maintenance of a sound balance between field and factory—for the farmer, a steady and profitable market for his own produce and the opportunity to buy the products of this factory, at reasonable prices: for the factory, a copious supply of raw material and a vast market for the finished product. The careful fostering of this natural, healthy and resilient partnership, which is the foundation of our economic strength and the firm base or platform from which we may develop our overseas trade must be the first care of Government and all concerned with industry or with agriculture."

Describing the effect of the cloth control scheme, he said that prices of cloth of all kinds had fallen not only in wholesale but also in retail markets. In some retail markets they have fallen by more than 40%.

Referring to inflation, he said that the Government was determined to do everything in their power to stabilize economic conditions at tolerable levels. The drive against inflation was being pursued simultaneously in the monetary and commodity fields. The Government of India was also resolved to check speculation and profiteering in every sphere which affects the life of the nation and to repress and penalize all cognate anti-social activities.

He was glad to say that the measures already taken were beginning to have a most salutary effect. Not only had the vicious upward trend been checked, but several important indices had moved sharply downwards with beneficial effect on the whole price structure, but there was no room for complacency.

"We should not," he said, "delude ourselves that this battle was over. On the contrary the campaign has only begun and we are determined to maintain pressure and fight relentlessly on every part of the anti-inflationary front. The stake is nothing less than the economic safety of the country: it demands co-operation, co-operation of all of us, and no effort can be relaxed until this insidious danger is removed.

He thanked the Indian Press for all the help it had given him during his stay in India. Occasions there may have been when there were differences of view on matters connected with the Press. Misunderstanding there may have been from time to time, but I remain deeply grateful to this institution for its fairness, its eager anxiety to serve the public, its concern to observe and if possible to improve the best traditions of journalism, and I would not like to leave India without paying this public tribute to it and to that hard-working body of intelligent and able men by whom India is so well served in the Press."

The Viceroy paid a tribute to the spirit of the people of India, the confidence, enthusiasm and courage which they had shown during the four years of a devastating and exhausting war and the cheerful readiness with which they had borne the many burdens that a total war involved. There had been great achievement on the home front as well as in the field and one on which India would look back with pride and the world with admiration. The Viceroy also conveyed his sincere and heartfelt thanks to the personnel of all the services in the country.

RECIPROCITY ACT AMEND. BILL

2nd AUGUST:—South African soldiers passing through India at the end of the war should not be permitted to stay for more than six months, while soldiers from other countries might be allowed a year's time. This was urged by nearly a dozen speakers in the Assembly this afternoon supporting an amendment moved by Sir

Syed Raza Ali to Dr. *N. B. Khare's* Reciprocity Act Amendment Bill, the clauses of which were under discussion. *Sir Raza Ali's* amendment related to the clause providing that "any direction made by the Central Government imposing disabilities in respect of entry into or travel or residence in British India upon persons domiciled in a British possession shall not, until the expiry of one year after the termination of the present hostilities, apply to any person domiciled in that British possession who is a member of the armed forces. The amendment, which sought to reduce the period from one year to six months, was supported by Mr. *Husseinbhai Lalji*, Mr. *Kailash Behari Lal*, *Sir Mohamed Yamin Khan*, *Maulana Zafar Ali*, Mr. *Govind Deshmukh*, *Sir Vithal Chandavarkar*, *Sir Cowasji Jehangir*, Mr. *N. M. Joshi*, Mr. *M. Nauman*, Mr. *K. C. Neogy* and *Maulvi Abdul Ghani*. They emphasized that South Africa must be made to feel that, because of the unfortunate action taken by the Union Parliament in passing the pegging legislation, India was determined to treat S. African nationals with special severity. *Sir Frederick James*, European Group, opposed the amendment and *Sir Firoz Khan Noon*, Defence Member, speaking as Member-in-charge of demobilization, pleaded against placing any time limit and urged the House to accept the assurance that the Government would lose no time in taking demobilized S African soldiers out of the country. After all there would be no soldier who would not want to rush home as quickly as possible after demobilization. But there might be difficulties of transport and allowance must be made for that. Dr. *N. B. Khare*, Indian Overseas Member accepted the amendment, which was passed. The House also passed Mr. *Deshmukh's* amendment providing that the Bill shall come into force from Sept. 1. Further debate was adjourned.

3rd. AUGUST:—South African officers should not be placed in positions in which they would have Indian troops serving under them, and wherever these officers were already in such positions they should be transferred. This was one of the immediate retaliatory actions suggested by *Sir Yamin Khan* and *Sardar Sant Singh*, speaking on the third reading of Dr. *Khare's* Reciprocity Act Amendment Bill, to-day. *Sir Raza Ali*, Mr. *K. C. Neogy*, *Sir Frederick James*, *Sir Vithal Chandavarkar*, Mr. *Hussainbhai Lalji*, Dr. *Bannerji*, *Syed Murtaza Saheb* and Mr. *Kailash Bihari Lal* gave general support to the Bill as amended and congratulated Dr. *Khare* and Mr. *Aney*, former Overseas Member. *Sir Raza Ali* commended to Government the principle of blow for blow in its relations with South Africa and urged them to give up their defensive attitude. He added that a further amending Bill with more stringent provisions was necessary and should be brought soon. Dr. *Khare* replying said as a doctor he knew when and how to use the knife against countries which ill-treated Indian nationals. If certain countries needed incision than others he would not hesitate to make one. The Bill was passed.

Earlier, in the course of the debate on the second reading, the House divided on *Sir Raza Ali's* amendment prescribing one year's imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000 or both as punishment for disobedience of any rule made under the Act. The amendment was rejected by 47 votes to 29.

DELHI UNIVERSITY AMEND, BILL

The House next took up discussion of the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill on the motion of Mr. *J. D. Tyson*, Education Secretary, that it be taken into consideration. Mr. *Tyson* referred to the general agreement among members of the Select Committee whose report was before the House, on the provisions of the Bill, particularly the major issue of a three year degree course, on which there was only one dissident. *Maulvi Abdul Ghani* moved the circulation of the Bill and he was supported by *Sir Ziauddin Ahmed* and Mr. *Lalchand Navalral*. Mr. *S. C. Chatterji* opposed the motion.

NUMBER OF DETENUS

The number of persons detained under the Defence of India Rule 26 from the beginning of the war up to June 1, 1943, was 17,766 of whom 11,717 were still under detention on that date, said the Home Member in reply to Mr. *Bhutto's* question in the Assembly. The number of persons convicted during the same period under the Defence of India Rules was 75,941, while the number actually in jail on June 1 was 15,099. The above totals did not however include the North West Frontier Provinces, for which figures were not available.

There was no automatic arrangement for the review of each case of detention after a particular period, the Home Member added. The principle which both the

Government of India and Provincial Governments had constantly in mind, however, was that no security prisoner shall remain in jail whose detention was essential in the interests of security and the efficient prosecution of the war.

DELHI UNIVERSITY AMEND BILL

4th. & 5th. AUGUST:—Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, concluding his speech in favour of the motion, insisted that there should be statutory safeguards that arbitrary power regarding withdrawal of recognition of colleges would not be exercised. Mr. Habibur Rehman opposed the circulation motion as that would only mean delay. Mr. John Sargent, Educational Adviser to the Government of India was in belief that the reason why the three years course was not introduced in other universities was that it was not possible unless the standard of high school education was raised. All the university bodies were in full agreement with the proposal of having a three year course and had fully endorsed the provision of a wholetime vice-chancellor and the suggestion regarding withdrawal of recognition of colleges. In Delhi, Mr. Sargent continued, they were in a position to re-organise high school education. If they were able to carry out a universally liked idea, it seemed to him that they were doing a good thing. He admitted that migration of students from and to the Delhi University appeared to be a complicated business, but reciprocal arrangements could be made by goodwill on both sides. Professor P. N. Banerji asked why such a comparatively small university as that of Delhi should have a paid vice-chancellor while a large institution like the Calcutta University was content with an honorary vice-chancellor.

The motion for circulation was rejected by 45 votes to 38 and the motion for consideration passed by 18 to 28. The House took up discussion of the clauses, and had not concluded when it adjourned till the next day, the 5th. August, when on the second reading of the Bill the House rejected by 40 votes to 26 an amendment to reduce the term of office of the Vice-Chancellor from four to three years.

During discussion of the clauses of the Bill today, the Muslim League Party made a sustained attempt to secure increased Muslim representation in the administrative and other bodies of the University. Mr. Ghulam Bhik Nairang moved an amendment that of the three persons forming the committee to select names for the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor, one shall be a Muslim. He said that the amendment would remove the feeling among Muslims that since its inception the Delhi University had, for all practical purposes, been another edition of the Benares University. Condemning the attempt "to communalize a temple of learning," Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said: "We have had too much communalism in this country. Let us at least have education free from that taint. I would not mind if all the three persons belonged to one community. Let them not ask for it because they are Muslims." Mr. J. D. Tyson, Education Secretary, opposing the amendment, pointed out that there was no provision for communal representation in the Delhi University Act as it stood. No request had been received from the University. He had had the University Acts in India searched and was told that the principle of communal representation had not been accepted by any university except the Dacca University, where it was accepted as a special case. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, replying to Mr. Mehta, said that the temple of learning lost all its sanctity when it became the stronghold of one particular community. Referring to Mr. Tyson's statement about the principle of communalism the speaker asked, why fight shy of the problem now if the complaints were justified that Muslims had not had a fair chance in the past in the Delhi University? Mr. S. C. Chatterjee appealed to the Muslim League Party to consider whether though their grievances were genuine, it would redound to the credit of this House and the country if it made an enactment which advertised the fact that even in a temple of learning they could not rise above communal prejudices. The amendment was rejected by 37 votes of 21.

DEBATE ON THE FOOD SITUATION

9th. AUGUST:—Initiating the food debate in the Assembly today, Sir Mohammed Azizul Haque, Food Member described the difficulties and obstructions the Government had to face. "Unabated action has brought us safely through great difficulties in this first six months of the year," he said. "We have many difficulties today and we shall probably have more difficulties in the future. I can assure the House that the Department for which I speak will spare no effort to solve

these difficulties." Calling for support of the Government in their efforts, *Sir Azizul* declared: "I hope that the discussions with the provinces and the States in conferences we have organized will lead to greater mutual understanding and greater co-operation. There are still those in this country who do not help us; who are indifferent to the fate of others, so long as they can attain their own selfish and absolute security of profit. I appeal to public opinion to express itself against those men; against the hoarders and speculators. So far as I and my Department are concerned, so far as the provincial Governments working closely with us are concerned, we will do our best to see that they do not escape. He described the results of the food conferences held since 1939 and referring to the conference of Dec. 1942, said that the rice position was discussed in it and on behalf of the Bengal Government which was represented by official representatives and the then Chief Minister. It was stated: "We do not require for the next few months any rice even though we are in deficit." On inquiry whether the Bengal Government had any suggestion to make as to how they would be able to get rice if it was required by the province, neither the Chief Minister nor the official representative had any suggestions to offer. "We have to make our suggestion," said the official representative, "when the occasion arises." The general position taken up by Bengal was that as they were not in surplus, but in deficit, they should not be asked to contribute in any way to the all-India pool and that they would be able to manage their affairs if they were not asked to undertake any extra provincial responsibility. The Chief Minister said at this conference: "We know rice is enough for us. We do require some wheat from outside. We do not want to be fixed to a policy. We shall act as we may decide." The other provinces thereupon considered their deficits and surpluses without taking Bengal into account. As regards Millets the Bengal representative declared that his province was not particularly interested. The conference made certain general recommendations. As regards price control Bengal was definitely against fixing any price on the ground that the commodities would not come out. Bengal opinion was as follows: "We have regarded the whole affair as so academic that we have not attempted to make any calculations. In the case of rice, it is of little importance, so long as we are allowed to look after our own interests." Madras, the C. P. and Assam were also opposed to the enforcement of any maximum price and the U. P. was opposed to the fixing of the price of any commodity other than wheat. The official representative of Bengal was of the opinion that all price control measures should be given up and that the price should be moderated by market activities and controlled distribution. The Punjab, the main wheat producing surplus area, agreed to a purchasing agency subject to the Provincial Government deciding the quantity to be exported from the province. Referring to the second Food Conference in February this year, the Food Member described the procurement and supply plan which was one of the decisions at the conference, and said that taking the all-India position as a whole the Central Government should have received during April, May and June about 1,450,000 tons of various kinds of food grains from the surplus provinces. They actually obtained just about 5·7 lakhs tons for distribution to deficit Provinces and States. "By about the beginning of May the situation began to assume a critical character, and it looked as if the food situation in Bengal was beginning to get completely out of hand. The province was faced with a rigorous shortage and it looked as if the industrial war effort generally and civil life of the province were in distinct danger of dislocation with its inevitable reaction on other areas as well. The Government of India had, therefore, no other alternative but to tide over the immediate situation by introducing free trade in the Eastern Zone as the only means of getting a flow of foodgrains into the deficit areas. This was done and for the time being a grave crisis was averted. If free trade had full play, it would have had a permanent effect not only in bringing supplies to the deficit areas but also bringing down price level of the whole of the eastern region, even though there would have been some temporary rise for a time till the market found its equilibrium. But as soon as free trade was declared in the Eastern Zone, obstructions of every kind were placed in its way. I have before me a list of over 60 cases reported from time to time, and we have not yet been able to complete the investigation of these cases. But the nature of the allegations is as follows: Stocks purchased were requisitioned, stocks purchased were seized, a percentage of all purchases was ordered to be surrendered and in some cases at a much lower price than purchase prices, stockists were ordered to close godowns, traders were warned not to sell, station masters were asked to refuse wagons, carters and carriers

were stopped from assisting movements, export was banned by peremptory orders."

A voice: By whom? By Government?

Sir Azizul Haque said until the investigations were finished he was not prepared to say.

"Among those who complained, were the General Managers of Railways, the Chief Mining Engineer of the Railway Board, the Price Administrator, the Indian Mining Association, the Officer-in-charge of Rice Supplies to aerodrome construction, the Chambers of Commerce and industrial concerns, not to speak of traders and purchasing agents. It is said that trade agents were arrested and prosecuted and that goods in transit were seized. Thus free trade did not function. Taking the case of one of the provinces, we had an authoritative statement that the province had at least 3,000,000 mds of surplus grains. This province did not take any step from Jan. to April to purchase any rice for its own purposes at a time when price was admittedly low. Yet with the introduction of free trade it tried to build a reserve stock for its own needs. We are just at the time considering the feasibility of gradually restoring free trade throughout India as the only other means of ensuring steady supply, thereby bringing down the general price level and distributing supplies commensurate with the needs of various parts of India. But for some time it looked as if this may possibly endanger even the partial supply to the deficit areas. With few exceptions, there was no acceptance of a common responsibility." To devise immediate steps, a conference was convened in July and it expressed itself definitely against any form of free trade and recommended reversion to the original procurement plan functioning under the Government of India, but with purchasing organizations working under provincial Governments. The Government of India accepted the recommendations of the conference. To overcome transport difficulties the Food Member went to Lahore to settle matters on the spot, but just at the time when we could clear up all operational difficulties, there came the unfortunate breach due to the Damodar flood. An attempt was made to send more grain by ships and two ships were actually loaded with wheat. But just after loading, the ships developed engine troubles and were now under repair. We have done all that is possible, but none can contend against obvious limitations and even where we can it cannot be done in a day. If growers are asked not to sell but to wait for better prices, if grains do not come to the 'mundies' in monsoon conditions, if some over-zealous officer 1,000 miles away requisitions foodgrains while in transit through this area from one State or province to another, it takes time for information to come, remedies devised, and goods moved again. For the time being our efforts are all directed to one end, namely, to arrange and ensure more supplies to the deficit areas. We propose to take other remedial and necessary measures as soon as the exigencies of the moment are under control. If the Government of India have to accept any responsibility in the food problem in India, we must devise adequate machinery to carry out and quickly enforce our decisions. How this can be done and ensured cannot be decided until the difficulties of the moment are tided over. The Food Member went on to point out that probably the provinces, both deficit and surplus, never anticipated any acute shortage. It was not the Bengal Administration alone which failed to anticipate events. Referring to the criticism that exports were the cause of shortage he stated that total exports of rice and wheat since January up to date was just about 85,000 tons, including exports to Ceylon. Since then rice export had been banned and unless there was a surplus in hand after meeting India's own needs, Government did not propose to export other foodgrains either, except such small quantities as might be necessary in the interests of India. About Defence purchases, he stated that from January to July the total of wheat and rice was about 275,000 tons to feed 2,000,000 men in the Army. The food problem was much deeper than appeared on the surface. If the average adult diet was only 1 lb. of foodgrains a day, the consumption needs of India was 50·5 million tons. With 45 million tons as seed requirements, the total foodgrains necessary was at least 55 millions tons. If half the people of India consumed a little more, namely, 1½ lbs. a day, the figures would go up to 61 million tons, and normal production of the principal foodgrains was only about 50 or 51 million tons. If the growers chose to keep any quantity as insurance against bad harvest, if they ate a little more than the poor meal of past years if there was any carry-over, it meant a gap in the supplies available in the existing conditions of things for the non-agriculturist population. The whole economy of India in the past was on the basis of India as one economic unit. "A spirit of economic nationalism is, no doubt, a healthy feature in the economic life of the people. But

when policies of economic nationalism are carried to such extremes as to exclude and prevent the fullest inter-provincial co-operation in times of food shortage, in the absence of the realization of a common purpose, it becomes difficult to devise any scheme that fits the interests of all and even when an agreement is reached one comes across many obstacles which give pretexts for breaking any agreement reached. In Europe, the same conditions have led to the present war. In India it has brought about the present food problem. He referred to the long-range Food Committee and said its report was being drafted and it was Government's intention to take action on the report without the least possible delay. He paid a tribute to other departments of Government such as the Agricultural Department and the War Transport Department, which were helping in the solution of the food problem.

Mr. *Akhil Chandra Dutta* urged that there should be no legal quibbling about the constitutional position; the Centre should take up the ultimate responsibility to organize and co-ordinate an all-India food policy. The case of Bengal was a special one. There the famine had resulted from war conditions and the Government of India, in the interest of defence of the whole country, should come to the province's rescue. To meet the emergency situation of the province military stores within Bengal should be made available immediately as loan for a temporary period, and the Government should stop purchases for the military, except for immediate requirements. He wanted Bengal to be declared a "famine" area forthwith.

Sir *A. H. Ghuznavi* said: "The crisis in Bengal has resulted from a series of blunders on the part of the Government ever since the outbreak of the war." Even after the declaration of war by Japan, Government did not wake up to the necessity to examine the statistical position of rice although it was common knowledge that Burma rice fed almost half the labour population of India and thus enable the superior quality of Bengal rice to be exported to other parts of India and even outside. When supplies from Burma stopped, the Government should have stopped the export of rice from the province and should have laid down enough stocks to provide for the contingency which was evident to all." He appealed to the Government of India to send food to Bengal and save human lives.

Sir *Henry Richardson*, Leader of the European Group, said he could not congratulate the Food Member or the Government for the programme of business this session. It was inescapable that Government laid itself open to criticism on the ground that while people were starving, discontent was rife all over the country and the food problem a burning question. Government were content to fiddle with legislative measures which were of far less urgency and which could have waited. (Hear Hear). It was deplorable that after all that had happened the lesson of the folly of being too late had not been learnt. The Food Department itself was formed years too late. When other countries were planning and rationing, India had a surplus in many commodities which, had a Food Department existed, could have been purchased and stored by Government as provision against the rainy day which had now come and found India unprepared. He emphasized the demand that this all-important subject of food should be placed in charge of a Member with ripe experience who would be able to devote his entire time solely to the problem, instead of one of the most hard-worked Members who inherited not only the Commerce Department but the Food Department and the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies. Criticizing the inadequacy of measures against hoarding the speaker demanded that, irrespective of who these persons might be, their names should be made known throughout the country and severe punishment meted out to them in order that once and for all warning might be given to all those other people who had only been encouraged by the ridiculous punishments which had been awarded (Cheers).

10th. AUGUST:—The transport aspect of the food problem was explained by Sir *Edward Benthall*, War Transport Member, when the Assembly resumed the food situation to-day. Sir Edward remarked that the speech which seemed to strike the right note was that of Mr. Joshi yesterday when he said that the magnitude of the deficit in the country was not such that it could not be overcome by efficient management. The food situation, he went on, would not be saved by a five-day debate, as a member suggested, but by action within the next six or eight weeks to secure the movement of food from the surplus to the deficit areas. As part of the action towards that end, the Transport Member mentioned that in recent weeks

progress had been made in co-ordinating the work of five different agencies, whose close co-operation was essential for a successful solution of the problem, namely, the Food Department, the Government of India, the Governments of the surplus provinces, the Governments of the receiving provinces, the priorities organisation. The result of such co-operation, he said, was demonstrated in the situation in Bombay, where six months ago, the position was desperate but now, owing to the collaboration of the Central Government and other Provincial Governments, special trains had been arranged, rationing had been introduced and there was ample supply of millets and wheat, and there was no general anxiety. The Transport Member admitted that the movement programme to South India fell short of expectations owing to railway operational difficulties but it was satisfactory that at the end of July 105.5 wagons per day were passing through Delhi against a target of 110 wagons a day in that direction. Food grains for Travancore and Cochin were moving via Karachi and although he had no recent figures, he had no reason to suppose that plan was not operating satisfactorily.

Referring to Bengal, he said that priority arrangements had been made to move 90 wagons of foodstuffs a day through the E. I. R. and 100 wagons a day through the B. N. R. besides foodstuffs sent in by other railways and those produced in the Provinces, and those sent in by steamer from Karachi. One steamer had been loaded and further shipments were being arranged. This route, the Transport Member observed, must be the route for further relief on a major scale in the near future. The quantity sent through the E. I. R. and B. N. R. would represent some 8,000,000 lbs. a day, which would be sufficient to feed more than 3,000,000 people at two and a half lbs. a day for each. The population of Calcutta and Howrah was 2,500,000. Efficient co-operation and energetic management could see the Province of Bengal through the next critical weeks, if support was given to both the Government of India and the Government of Bengal instead of making the sufferings of the people the sport of politics.

Mr. *Bhutto* considered it futile to have the debate if the Central Government were powerless to do anything. He believed nothing could be done unless the Provincial Governments were brought under control and the Food Department completely centralised. He suggested the appointment of a Committee of both Houses with the Food Member as President to deal with the situation and also suggested that Axis prisoners of war should be transferred from India to Australia and Canada.

Mr. *P. J. Griffiths*, European Group, after commenting on the "incredible slowness" of the Government of India and the obstinacy and obstruction of the provinces, said that the basic plan, though it failed when it came to Bengal, did much to ease the situation regarding wheat. It was certainly a plan which lessened the disaster, and the change at the time it was made from the basic plan to the policy of free trade was the part of wisdom and statesmanship and he for one would not be a party to any condemnation of the Government on that score. Suggesting practical action under four heads, he advocated, firstly, rationing in urban areas all over the country, secondly, a drive for food stocks similar to the recent drive in Calcutta, thirdly, very much stronger action against offenders and fourthly, a very much stronger line with Provincial Governments which would not play. Mr. Griffiths compared the methods adopted in India with that followed in Chungking where big prosperous merchants who had offended against the food law were paraded through the public streets with words of ignominy and contempt written upon them. Was it not time that something really drastic was done in this country? Dealings of the Central Government with Provincial Governments, Mr. Griffiths emphasised, were bilateral. Provincial Governments wanted support from the Central Government in many matters, and the Central Government had, through indirect methods, endless ways of bringing pressure on the Provincial Governments. (Hear, hear.) He declared that the greatest obstinacy had been shown by some of those provinces which were at present governed by section 93 (cheers). Mr. Griffiths concluded with a strong plea for vigorous action.

Mr. *K. C. Neogy* compared the present situation in Bengal with what existed in 1770, when the East India Company hoarded food in the name of its employees. The East India Company, he said, still existed in the country. Lord Clive might not be with them but there was the Lord of Olive Street installed in the Government benches (laughter and cheers). India, Mr. Neogy pointed out, was normally a deficit country with regard to food-stuffs. It was admitted that there were 20,00,000 soldiers enlisted in the country and a very large number of foreign troops brought

from outside besides the large number of foreign prisoners of war who he understood were being entertained with a lavishness due to foreign friendly potentates—all these meant an excessive consumption of food and went to aggravate the deficit. He suggested that ships such as those advertised by Mr. Griffiths with millions of tons of wheat from Australia and other surplus areas should steam towards India and as an emergent measure military authorities should be induced to part with a part of their stocks. The Food Member had referred to the attitude of the Bengal Government representatives at the food conference, but, asked Mr. Neogy, what self-respecting Government could be expected to depend upon the Government of India. It had been stated in reply to his question that 793,000 tons were required to be sent to Bengal and it was agreed that that quantity was going to be sent to that province by the Central Government. But actually 39,693 tons had been provided. What, asked Mr. Neogy, was the use of the Bengal Government disclosing its plans to a Government of this character. He was not surprised therefore that the Government of Bengal did not take the Government of India seriously in this matter. It had also been stated in reply to his questions that there had been no exports from Bengal after March this year. But he wanted to know what was the export from December upto March. No figure had been given to him, but in the Bengal legislature the figure given of export in 1943 was 2.84 lakh tons of rice. He did not know how far this was correct but that was the figure given.

Sir Edward Benthall : Exported whereto ?

Mr. Neogy said : I don't care where it went so long as it went out of the province and was thus denied to the people of the province.

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan said that the object of the debate had been completely frustrated as the Government had not told them what steps they proposed to take to relieve the situation or invited the advice of the members on those proposals. How could the non-official members assist the Government, when they did not know what the Government proposed to do. He also criticised the discussion on food having been fixed for the last days of the session and said while the people were crying for food, Government were thinking of improving higher education in the country. (Laughter). The Nawabzada charged the Government with criminal negligence in not setting up the Food Department for so long after the outbreak of the war, and it was also criminal negligence on their part to ignore the home front. Provincial Governments would not co-operate with them, Government had asked the country to damn those people who had placed obstructions in the food policy, but Government were not bold enough to name those people. The Government of India, as at present constituted, the Nawabzada believed, could not command the confidence of the people. Food was the most important thing and in this the Government had been most negligent. He urged on the Government to get a move on now and when the next crop came, he hoped, they would not be found in the same mess.

Sir Azizul Haque, Food Member, winding up the debate, declared that he yielded to none in the House in feeling for the sufferings of the people. The speeches during the last two days seemed to suggest that the situation was solely the result of one or two factors which each speaker stressed. For instance, it had been stated that huge quantities of rice were lost with the loss of Burma. The Food Member pointed out that the total rice production in India was 25,000,000 tons and the total import from Burma was 1½ million tons. So far as Bengal was concerned, the average imports from Burma were 400,000 tons, and excluding exports from Bengal the net import into that province was roughly 200,000 tons. In 1941-42 the net import into Bengal was 224,000 tons as against a production of 8½ million tons.

The debate concluded and the Assembly adjourned.

ASSEMBLY UPROAR—SECRET SESSION NOT HELD

12th. AUGUST :—An uproar and heated exchanges marked the proceedings this morning when *Nawab Siddiq Ali Khan* sought leave for an adjournment motion to discuss "the failure of Government to secure the attendance of Government Members in time to constitute a quorum for the holding of the afternoon meeting of the secret session on Aug 11, thereby depriving the House of the privilege of eliciting full information about the war situation and discussing it."

The President remarked that he understood that 21 members were actually present yesterday afternoon (Voice : "Eighteen") and that according to the usual practice no bell was rung. As for the motion, did it imply that only Government members were to attend the House in time ? Was that not equally the duty of elected members ?

Several voices : "The elected members were present : 20 of them were in the House. Only one official member was present."

Sir Yamin Khan drew the Chair's attention to a ruling given by President Patel that when there was official business in the House, it was the duty of the official benches to keep the quorum.

The *President* could not hold that it was the duty of only Government members and members nominated by the Government to attend the House regularly and in proper time and that this was not the duty of the elected members. Were he to lay down any such rule it would mean that the constituencies need not look to the members elected by them to carry out their duty. He was loath to give any such ruling.

DEBATE ON CURRENCY POLICY

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed moved a resolution of the Government's currency policy and concentration of their attention more on the stability of the bank rate of interest. He declared that if the price of three sets of articles namely, silver, cotton piecegoods and wheat and rice, were stabilized, the prices of other commodities would move in sympathy. He suggested that a maximum rise of 50% over the pre-war price was reasonable, and the Government should fix prices at the level. As it was, the value of the rupee had gone down to 8 annas and therefore it was necessary that the salary of Government employees should be doubled.

The Finance Member, *Sir Jeremy Raisman* said that with regard to inflation the state of affairs which existed in this country up to the beginning of May was capable of being construed as leading to uncontrolled inflation, and he admitted that the Government had anxious moments over the tendencies which were apparent at that time, but the Government had now satisfied themselves of their ability to deal with that situation. There was now no feeling of pessimism whatever. The important thing in war time was to ensure that even though currency and bank deposits might expand they did not have their automatic effect on the price level. The Government had satisfied themselves that it was not necessary to submit to any automatic advance of price because of increase in the volume of currency. He himself was not sure of it three months ago, but he was quite sure today that the Government could stop that nonsense. It required drastic action and the fullest measure of public support for that action. Rebutting Mr. Krishnamachari's remarks on government loans, the Finance Member drew attention to the remarkable success of Government loans, and said that the volume of money which flowed into Government coffers was a definite indication of a swing-back from commodity to money as against the previous tendency of a move from money to goods. He would point out that in a vast country like India, there was no need to be alarmed by the currency figures of 750 crores or even a thousand crores. In relation to the population of the country and other factors, it was not an intrinsically excessive figure, but it was important to check the tendencies which that figure seemed to indicate. Dealing with commodity controls, the Finance Member expressed confidence that the textile control experiment would succeed.

Dr. P. N. Bannerjee : What if it fails ?

The Finance Member declared that if it failed it would be the Government's duty to face the resultant situation without regard to sentiment. But he did not believe that the experiment would fail. He believed the leaders of the textile industry had realized that the position which existed a few months ago could not possibly continue, and they realized their duty to this country and were prepared to help the Government to supply cheap cloth. He explained that control must continue in regard to food, and said that in the circumstances sugar control in spite of initial difficulties was working satisfactorily. It was the success of sugar control which encouraged him to feel that control of the textile industry could also be worked. It was the Government's intention to proceed further with commodity control and bring all commodities to a reasonable price level. He regarded as his enemy every man, who tried to produce a rise in commodity prices. He reiterated his belief that it was possible to deal effectively with inflation in this country. It required determination on the Government's part : it required the fullest support of the people. It was a course which went deep down to the national well-being and one in which everybody could assist without feeling that he was doing damage to any political conviction.

WAR INJURIES (COMPENSATION INSURANCE) BILL

18th. AUGUST :—The Assembly to-day passed the War Injuries (Compensation

Insurance) Bill introduced by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member of the Government of India. During the debate on the Bill, Dr. Ambedkar agreed to an amendment moved by Mr. Abdur Rashid Chaudhury and supported by Mr. Hussainbhai Lalji to omit the provision under which any person authorized by the Government might enter any premises or property under the control of an employer for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the number of persons employed or other details necessary for the administration of the Act. Mr. Lalji vehemently declared that such a power was not given even to the income-tax authorities, who had the responsibility of collecting crores of rupees. Dr. Ambedkar, in agreeing to the amendment, said he thought the Government's purposes would be sufficiently served by the other provision in the same clause requiring any employer to submit to an authorized person such accounts, books or other documents as were necessary.

The House agreed to Dr. Ambedkar's amendment providing that the total amount of the fund raised from premiums paid by employers for the insurance of employees under the war injuries compensation insurance scheme shall not be more than Rs. 1,500,000 and that if after all payments made out of the fund any balance remains, it shall be constituted into a fund to be utilized and administered by the Central Government for the benefit of workmen.

DELHI UNIVERSITY AMEND. BILL

The House then resumed discussion on the Delhi University Act (Amendment) Bill and accepted two amendments, one by the Government and the other by the Muslim League Party. The Government's amendment raised the number from 8 to 12 of bodies and associations, which if approved by the Chancellor, could elect representatives to the Court of the University. The League's amendment raised the number of representatives from the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly on the Court from two and four to four and eight respectively. Mr. J. P. Tyson, Education Secretary, said the Government amendment would enable the Chancellor to redress the grievances of minorities. Another amendment by the League Party seeking to raise the number of persons to be appointed by the Chancellor to the Court, from 15 to 16 "at least half of whom shall be muslims," was under discussion, when the House rose for the day.

17th. AUGUST:—Continuing the debate on the Delhi University Bill, the Assembly today disposed of 14 out of 101 amendments so far tabled relating to the schedules to the Bill. Discussion to-day again centred round the demand of the Muslim League for adequate representation of the community on the Court and Executive Council of the University. Rao Bahadur N. Shivraj's amendment urging reservation of three seats for the Scheduled Castes and two for labour, out of the 12 seats which the Chancellor is given power to fill to secure the representation of minorities not otherwise in his opinion adequately represented, was rejected by 36 votes to 16. The amendments by the Muslim League were rejected after the Chair had asked the supporters to stand in their seats. The Government's amendment, which was accepted, increased the number to be nominated on the University Court by the Chancellor from 15 to 25, of whom 18 shall be appointed to secure representation of minorities not otherwise in his opinion adequately represented. The House agreed to reduce the number of seats on the Executive Council allotted to professors from two to one and then adjourned.

18th. AUGUST:—Muslim and minority representation in the University services was discussed at great length on the second reading of the Bill in the Assembly to-day. Mrs. Renuka Ray, speaking on an amendment for the elimination of the system of nomination for women on the Executive Council of the Delhi University, asserted that women in India were opposed to the system of nomination and she would either like to have women coopted by the Executive Council or elected by a special constituency of women registered graduates from all parts of India. The demand for minority representation in the University services occupied the Assembly for the rest of the day. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Moulvi Abdul Ghani, Mr. Nauman, Mr. Kazmi, Maulana Zafarali and Sir Ziauddin supported the amendment while Mr. Kailash Beharilal opposed it. So did the Government. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan explained that their purpose in moving various amendments on the Delhi University bill was not only to secure effective representation for the Mussalmans on the Delhi University, but also to raise the general question of university education for the Mussalmans. He quoted figures to show that five universities in India did not employ any Muslim teacher, while twelve did not employ Mussalman teachers in science subjects. Calcutta University had 2 Muslim teachers out of 120; Dacca had 4 out of 48, Lucknow had 2 out of 20

and Patna had 2 out of 31. In all there were 43 Muslim professors in the universities of India, all of whom belonged to the I.E.S. There was one Muslim Reader and six teachers in all. He wondered if the Government had realised the significance of their attitude that they would not accept the principle of communal representation in the university services. The Nawabzada asserted that he would not subscribe to the dictum of efficiency. Furthermore, there were suitable Mussalmans forthcoming for services in the universities. This view was further supported by Dr. Ziauddin, who speaking from his experience of the Aligarh University claimed that suitable Mussalmans were forthcoming for teaching posts in the universities. Government's view point was explained by Messrs. *Tyson* and *Sargent*. Confining himself to the Delhi University, Mr. *Tyson* claimed that the amendment would not be workable. Firstly, because the amendment was wide enough to include university teachers, who mostly belonged to the autonomous colleges and secondly, because the amendment would make religion instead of degree as the basis for selection. Mr. *Sargent* reminded the House that there was paucity of Muslim teachers even in the Dacca University, which had been cited as an example to copy by the Muslim League. He claimed that there was definite shortage of suitable Mussalmans for certain branches of teaching. In Delhi they were anxious to build a university and therefore they would look for quality in the teaching. The Assembly discussed eight amendments all of which were rejected and then adjourned.

19th. AUGUST :—The Assembly disposed of 13 amendments before it rose for the day. Two of these amendments were accepted by the Government. One of them added five members to the Academic Council. They would be appointed by the Chancellor and would be persons capable of advising the Academic Council on subjects connected with Islamic learning and culture. The other amendment added another two to the Academic Council, to be elected by the Court of the University.

The House devoted the rest of the day to discussing the demand of the Muslim League for Muslim representation on the Academic Council, the Board of Examiners, the Library Committee, and the committee of Courses and Studies. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Mr. G. B. Nairang, Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Mr. Q. A. Kazmi, Maulvi Abdul Ghani and Sir Yamin Khan supported the demand. The Nawabzada quoted figures to show the "entirely inadequate" representation of Muslims on some of the Delhi University bodies. Muslims, he said, would not rest till they had secured adequate representation on all the Universities in India. The fight on the Delhi University Bill was only the beginning. Mr. *Sargent*, Educational Commissioner, Government of India, Mr. J. D. *Tyson*, Education Secretary, and Mr. *Kailash Bihari Lall* opposed the amendments. Mr. *Tyson* reiterating the Government's viewpoint, said that although Government sympathized with the minorities and recognized the justice of their case, they were unable to accept the amendments, which sought to introduce communalism in the University. The Assembly at this stage adjourned.

20th. AUGUST :—Thirteen more amendments to the schedules of the Bill were disposed by the Assembly today. There were nearly 40 more amendments to be considered. Today the Assembly accepted five amendments one of which was by the Government. One of the Muslim League's amendments, which was adopted, reduced the initial fee for registered graduates from Rs. 20 to Rs. 15. The amendment reduced the period for annual fee from 15 years to 10 years. The other amendment of the League Party deleted the provision for recognition of Ramjas Intermediate College. The Nationalist Party's amendment provided that the Principal of the College concerned shall serve as an adviser on the committee of selection. All the other amendments were rejected.

The main discussion today centred round the proposals for a Muslim advisory board of seven members elected by the Muslim members of the Court to advise the university on matters affecting the interests of Muslim education. The Government opposed the amendment and was supported by Dr. P. N. *Banerjee*. The Muslim League Party was supported by Mr. Q. A. *Kazmi*. The Government's contention was that Muslim education did not differ from the education of other communities and if they were to set up a board for one community, they would have to do the same for others. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan explained how Muslim education differed from the education of the other communities. He said that after the August disturbances last year, students from the non-Muslim colleges went on strike. All non-Muslim Colleges were not functioning. The Arabic College was the only educational institution which continued to function. The Hindu boys had made politics part of their education. Muslim boys had not. He wanted to

know what action the University took against those boys who went on strike. The University did not take action, he said, because it was dominated by Hindus. They, the members of the Muslim League, had been endeavouring for the last 10 days to 'de-Hinduise' the University of Delhi. The speaker added that the experience of the last 20 years had shown that the interests of the Muslims in the Delhi University had gone to the wall. This had been admitted by the Government. The amendment was rejected by 39 votes to 15. The Assembly then rose for the day.

21st. AUGUST :—The Assembly disposed of 10 more amendments to the schedules of the Bill when it adjourned till Tuesday next. Two of these amendments were withdrawn and the remaining eight were rejected. Today's discussion centred round general provisions relating to colleges. The Bill lays down that, "save as otherwise provided in the Act, all degree colleges shall be in close proximity to one another and to the university and shall ordinarily be located on the University estate." Mr. G. B. Nairang, Mr. G. V. Deshmukh, Maulana Jafar Ali, Maulavi Abdul Ghani, Sir Mohammed Yamin Khan, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, Mr. Kailash Behari Lal, Mr. John Sargent, Mr. J. D. Tyson and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan participated in the debate.

The supporters of the amendment generally pointed out "the difficulties of Delhi students attending University lectures and games. They explained that the university site was about seven miles from new Delhi and it would be a real physical strain on the students to cycle to the university site, twice a day, once to attend lectures and once for games. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan appreciated the proposal as an ideal, but pointed out the difficulties in putting the ideal into practice. The first difficulty, said the Nawabzada, was that of finances. It was true that one college had already shifted and another was in the course of shifting to the new site. The smaller colleges, however, had not the finances to undertake the job, and unless the Government were prepared to guarantee liberal grants and loans it was no use making a statutory provision as was contemplated under the clause. He wanted the Government to vote for the provision with open eyes as it would cost them about Rs. 25 lakhs. The Speaker, proceeding, said that the university was planning its teaching on the basis of 3,000 students on its rolls, while the provision for hostel accommodation was for only 500 students. It was evident that a majority of students at the university would be non-resident students. In short, Delhi University could never become a residential university. Government was compelling all colleges to shift and cluster round the university. In doing so they must also consider the transport facilities for non-resident students. Mr. John Sargent, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, said that the proposal marked a definite change in the character of the university. The university was originally intended to be a residential university. In due course, that ideal underwent a change and developed into a university with corporate teaching by the constituent colleges. Mr. Sargent said that no college had been dissatisfied with the provision. The proposal would facilitate corporate teaching and colleges would be able to make reciprocal arrangements in order to specialise in particular subjects. As for finance Government, notwithstanding difficult times, had provided Rs. 8 lakhs during the last two years. The Muslim League's amendment was rejected by 28 votes to 20.

24th. AUGUST :—The Assembly passed the second reading of the Bill today, when the remaining 19 amendments were discussed, three being accepted and the others rejected. Today's discussion mainly centred round "instruction provided by colleges." The Bill laid down that recognition of a college could be withdrawn by a majority of members of the Executive Council. The Muslim League's amendment that the majority should be two-thirds was rejected by 30 votes to 17. Replying to an amendment by Seth Yusuf Haroon, the Educational Adviser, Mr. J. Sargent, assured the House that the intention of the Government was that all women's colleges should be staffed and inspected by women. There were, however, certain difficulties at present mainly on account of the paucity of suitable women of requisite qualifications. The amendment was withdrawn. Sir Ziauddin Ahmed's amendment elicited information that provision relating to a Diploma Board in domestic science had been made in anticipation of the Lady Irwin College for Women applying for recognition.

25th. AUGUST :—The Assembly today passed the Delhi University Act Amendment Bill without a division, the Muslim League Party dissenting. Mr. J. D. Tyson, Education Secretary, moving the third reading of the Bill, said that Government had no intention to completely overhaul the administrative machinery of Delhi University. Government primarily brought in the Bill to give legal

sanction to the three years' degree course. He denied the charge that the executive Council of the University was either a Government-ridden or a Vice-Chancellor-ridden body. Referring to the demand for communal representation on University bodies, Mr. *Tyson* said that Government were not satisfied with the present position and would always welcome minorities playing a greater part in the Delhi University. Government had undertaken to use their influence to get the principle of proportionate representation accepted by the University. As for Muslim representation, he said that there was only one Muslim-managed college in Delhi. There were 46 Muslim registered graduates out of 580 on the rolls. This was the main snag. The number of Muslim examinees, however, had been on the increase and were 300 last year out of a total of 1,800. This was an encouraging feature, and he hoped that in time to come the Muslim community would pull its full weight in the University.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed felt that the object of the Bill might have been achieved by a three-clause Bill. He said that the Delhi University had not had sufficient experiences yet to justify vital changes in its constitution. The most important thing, he said, was how the Act would be administered.

Sir Mohammed Yamin Khan said that he was glad that the Government had recognized the fact that the Muslims had not had a fair deal in the Delhi University and he welcomed the assurances given by Mr. *Tyson*. He hoped that Government would bring in an amending Bill to give effect to the suggestions made by the Muslim League.

Mr. *G. V. Deshmukh* welcomed the assurance given on behalf of Government that the consideration given to a community in the University would be in proportion to the advantage it took of the University institutions.

Mr. *J. Sargent*, Educational Commissioner, Government of India, speaking as an educationalist, felt that the Bill was unlucky to get involved in communal issues. He appreciated the general support given to the main principles of the Bill. Referring to corporate teaching, he said that their intention was to raise the standard of teaching in the University. He agreed that a fair trial should be given to the experiment, which was being launched in the shape of a 3-year degree course.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan said that he had been in favour of a 3-year degree course from the outset, but the Bill had introduced other fundamental changes of vital importance. Government, on the strength of their official and nominated bloc, had not accepted a single material change in the Bill. Referring to the charge of communalism, the *Nawabzada* said that it was an irony of fate that Government whose life-breath was communalism should come out to oppose the introduction of communalism in the University. He said: "Did not *Sir Edward Benthall* represent the Europeans, *Sir Sultan Ahmed* the Muslims and *Sir Jogendra Singh*, the Sikhs?"

Mr. *Tyson*, replying to the debate, explained that the Bill was a step towards making the Delhi University a model university. He disclosed that the University of Delhi had generally supported the Bill.

The Bill as amended was passed and the House adjourned *sine die*.

Autumn Session—New Delhi—8th to 19th. November 1943

VICEROY'S MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY

The Central Assembly began its autumn session at New Delhi on the 8th. November, 1943, when the President, *Sir Abdur Rahim*, read a message from the Viceroy. The Viceroy's message read:—"It is customary for a new Viceroy to address both Houses of the Indian Legislature at the first opportunity. I have declared to depart from the precedent and shall deliver no address during the November session. My reasons for this decision are:—First, that whereas my predecessors assumed office in April and were able to devote several months to the study of the Indian situation before an opportunity of addressing the Legislature occurred. I assumed office in October, less than three weeks before the opening of the November session: and secondly, that for the time being my energy must be very largely devoted to the study and treatment of the food problem—a matter upon which I do not feel that I could make a comprehensive statement in the immediate future. It is my intention to address both Chambers at an early stage of the Budget session of 1944."

After an absence of about four years, 10 members of the Congress Party attended the House today, and one of them, *Sardar Mangal Singh* put the first question of the day amid cheers.

COAL RATIONING SCHEME

During question time today, *Sir Edward Benthall*, War Transport Member, replying to *Mr. K. C. Neogy*, announced that the coal rationing scheme had now been put into operation. He stated that a total of 25.64 million tons a year had been adopted as a reasonable figure which could be made available for distribution. Rations had been fixed on the basis of actual supplies made during the 12-month period from August 1942 to July 1943 and took into account estimated increases in the consumption of essential services. The total allotment for industries and domestic supplies had been fixed at 1,024,587 tons a month, which represented an increase of 20 p.c. on actual supplies made between August 1942 and July 1943. The scheme was in essence a compromise between conflicting interests and made possible only by the pooling of resources between India and the UK. It was proposed to watch its working very closely, making internal adjustments whenever required and to review the position again early next year. As regards alternative fuels, *Sir Edward* mentioned that some industries in various parts of the country had been making extensive use of firewood, and an engineer had been appointed and attached to the office of the Controller of Coal Distribution, one of whose functions would be to advise industries regarding the utilization of alternative fuels. Referring to coal supplies to industries *Sir Edward* stated that against an average daily requirement of 25 Wagons, Calcutta received 18 wagons per day in July, but 23 wagons a day in August, 36 a day in Sept. and 35 per day up to Oct. 22.

FOODGRAINS DESPATCH TO CALCUTTA

Arising from a question about the dispatch of foodgrains to Calcutta, *Mr. Neogy* asked the War Transport Member whether it was a fact that the Bengal Government thought that the dispatching instructions of the railway authorities were defective, with the result that rice went to wheat sidings and vice versa and it took time to rearrange them. *Sir Edward* said that the instructions were not given by the railway authorities and that he could assure *Mr. Neogy* now that the movements were satisfactory. *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali* asked if the War Transport Member was aware that the statement attributed to the Bengal Government had been denied by that Government.

Sir Edward: I expect it was (Laughter).

INDIAN DELEGATION TO BRITAIN

The House, by 43 votes to 39, passed *Dr. Govind Deshmukh's* adjournment motion to censure Government on its "unwise decision to send non-official gentlemen selected by it to undertake a tour abroad in Britain and to speak on India's war effort." The Congress members voted with the Muslim League, the Nationalists, the Independents, and some unattached members for the motion. Moving the adjournment motion, *Dr. Deshmukh* questioned the necessity of sending out the delegation at this stage when the whole world had acknowledged the country's war effort and sacrifices. He asked if we were following the example of any other country in sending this delegation, and whether the Governments of the UK and the USA came here to advertise their war effort? He supported that the delegates would attempt to justify the Government of India's actions and policy regarding political prisoners, as they knew that the world outside was in sympathy with the demands for greater rights for the Indian people. With a vastly expanding Department of Information and Broadcasting, it should have been possible, he thought, to send more literature to those countries in the form of the pamphlets explaining India's war efforts. He considered that the reported expenditure of Rs. 60,000 per person could have been incurred on some useful purpose.

Sardar Mangal Singh (Congress) said that the Government were sending the delegation to whitewash their actions. There were a large number of foreign Press correspondents in this country, and they could be supplied with the information the Government wanted to reach the public of Britain and the USA. He suspected that the delegation was going abroad to say things which it could not say in this country. "Let the representatives of the people go abroad," he said, "and tell the world how this country is being governed, or rather misgoverned." There was no use in sending delegations which would carry on propaganda against the public of India.

Sir Sultan Ahmed said it was his duty to clear misconceptions which seemed to surround the delegation. The misapprehensions expressed, he declared, had no basis and the lecturers had been instructed not to say one word on politics. They were going out to speak on the country's war effort and nothing else. *Sir Sultan*

said that the demand for sending the delegation came from India's Agent-General in the USA and from the British Ministry of Information. They could not possibly refuse that request. They had no choice. They would have failed in their duty if they did not comply with that request. The expenses of the delegation's tour in the UK would be borne by HMG. (Laughter). The question of the apportionment of their expenses of travel from the UK to the USA and expenses incurred in India was still under consideration. The delegation, Sir Sultan continued, consisted of four people, all of them men, according to Government, competent to speak. They paid visits to different factories in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and he had no doubt that they were men of experience and knowledge and would not say anything they were prohibited from saying. He denied they were receiving instructions from various departments. He concluded by expressing his conviction that the speeches they would deliver would raise the status of India and not compromise the position of the country.

Sir Yamin Khan (Muslim League) felt that speeches by the Indian delegation giving out details of internal administration of war effort, such as working of factories, would be giving information to the enemy and thus would be highly detrimental to the interests of India. He said that an expert like Sir Guthrie Russell should have been sent out if the Government were anxious to conduct propaganda about their war effort.

Sir Rawaswami Mudaliar claimed that the issue before the House was whether it was desirable to publicize India's war effort and, if so, whether the selection of the personnel for the delegation was a suitable one. He asserted that so long as the selection was made by the Executive, there were bound to be criticisms from one interest or other against the choice. He explained that the field of selection in this country was a limited one. The Government, he claimed, were in a better position to judge whether India's war effort should be publicized abroad. Speaking from personal experience, he said, that the need for such publicity, particularly in the USA, was very great. He reminded the House that India at the Peace Conference would be asked what she had done to win the war; how her people had responded to the call of democracy, for which, he asserted, the war was being fought. "I hope Members will agree with me that it is of the highest importance that India's war effort should be publicized abroad." Some Members had referred to the food situation. It was a by-product of the war. People of the USA and the UK had no idea of what was happening in this country, and he held that the Government had done the right thing in deciding to send out a non-official delegation to educate public opinion in those countries about India's war effort.

TRADE UNIONS ACT AMEND. BILL

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, introduced a Bill to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act. The measure provides for compulsory recognition of Trade Unions, the main conditions of recognition being that the trade union must have been a registered union for 12 months and that it must have previously applied to the employer concerned for recognition. Unions formed on a communal or sectarian basis will not be eligible for recognition. Obligation of employers consequent on recognition are also detailed.

STATEMENT ON FOOD FOR INDIA

9th. NOVEMBER :—*Sir J. P. Srivastava*, Food Member, stated at question time today that six shiploads of foodgrains had arrived in India and although he did not know the exact tonnage he thought it was about 30,000, and more was coming. He said that the price at which wheat was landed in India was substantially low.

The Food Member faced a number of questions on Mr. Amery's statements in England on the food situation in India.

Mr. Neogy asked whether Mr. Amery's statement that the death-rate in Bengal was estimated at about 1,000 a week was based on information supplied by or through the Government of India.

Sir Jwala Prasad said that the Government of India had supplied information on the food situation, but it was not known whether Mr. Amery's statements were based on that information. "We have been sending telegrams to the Secretary of State from week to week."

Mr. Neogy: "Have HMG any other source of information apart from your telegrams?"

Sir Jwala Prasad said that they had.

Sir F. E. James : "How was it that in the early stages of the crisis, the Secretary of State made such grossly inaccurate statement in Parliament?"

Sir Jwala Prasad : "The question ought to be addressed to the Secretary of State. I am afraid."

Replying to Mr. *Neogy's* question about Lord Strabolgi's reference to a message from India, *Sir Jwala Prasad* said : "Shipments of wheat from Australia amounting to about 160,000 tons in all arrived in India between November 1942 and the end of April 1943. This quantity did not represent the full amount for which the Government of India had asked, but in view of the very difficult shipping position of the United Nations at that time, as well as the serious shortage of foodgrains in Ceylon, coupled with the success which had attended the efforts of the Government of India to procure old crop wheat earlier in the year and the prospects of a good rabi harvest, the Government of India agreed to forego further shipments of wheat on the understanding that a claim for imports later in the year might be favourably considered. We have had to make that claim, and shipments of wheat are now arriving in Indian ports."

Replying to Mr. *Chattopadhyaya*, the *Food Member* said that the civil population of Bengal was estimated at 63,090,000, and their requirements together with the military population, whose size it was not in the public interest to reveal, were estimated by the Bengal Government to be as follows :—Rice 3.9 million tons ; wheat 121,000 tons ; millets and maize 2,000 tons.

The deficits estimated by the Bengal Government were as follows :—Rice 450,000 tons ; wheat 112,000 tons ; millets and maize 2,000 tons. The quantities of foodgrains supplied to Bengal from April to Septembur 1943, were : Rice 204,000 tons (including arrivals during the free trade period) ; wheat and wheat products 187,000 tons ; millets and grain 43,500 tons.

Mr. *Neogy*. Is the Hon. Member aware that expert opinion is that the allowances of gruel given to destitutes are not supposed to be sufficient to keep a fair-sized rat alive?" (Laughter).

Sir Jwala Prasad : "That is a matter of opinion. When I visited Calcutta I was told that it was quite sufficient, and in some cases too much."

Mr. *Neogy* : "Will the Hon. Member try some gruel on himself and see how he flourishes?" (Laughter).

In the course of replies to questions about the food conference, Pandit *L. K. Maitra* interjected: "How many attended the conference and to what extent were they responsible for reducing the food supply in Delhi?" (Laughter).

Mr. *Abdur Rashid Chaudhury* : "Is it true that representatives of profiteers were directly or indirectly on the conferences?" (Laughter).

Replying to other questions, the *Food Member* said that the Government of India were closely and continually in touch with the Bengal Government with the object of improving methods of distribution and relief measures. Practical assistance and advice had been given ; rail and river distribution had been improved ; a senior Military Officer had been appointed as Director of Transport in Bengal ; local rationing schemes had been introduced, and over 5,400 relief centres opened. Reports from certain districts showed that there had been a perceptible improvement in conditions. About 23,000 tons of wheat had been released for the civilian population in Bengal this year from imports specially ordered for the Defence Services.

STABILIZATION OF PRICES

"We have reached a stage when in order to maintain the war effort it is necessary to cater for civilian requirements" said *Sir Jeremy Raisman*, Finance Member, Government of India in accepting a resolution of the Muslim League Party urging the stabilization of prices. The Finance Member observed that an attempt had to be made even now, to some extent at the expense of the war effort, to switch the country's productive resources to meeting civilian consumers' demands, and Government were continually at work to promote an expansion of production to meet civilian needs. The House finally passed *Sir Ziauddin Ahmed's* (League) resolution in an amended form recommending to the Government of India "to give the foremost place in their monetary policy to the stabilization of prices, on which the prosperity of the country largely depends".

The main resolution which was moved in the last session, recommended to the Governor-General-in-Council to modify their currency policy and to concentrate their attention more on the stability of prices than on the stability of the bank rate of interest. *Sir Aziz-ul-Haque*, Commerce Member, claimed that so far as

textile were concerned, Government had succeeded in bringing down the prices.

The Finance Member, in accepting the revised resolution, made it clear that the Government's policy in regard to the rate of interest on Government borrowings was quite definite and deliberate and they had no intention to depart from the cheap money policy hitherto followed. It had been vigorously criticised from certain quarters, but it had the overwhelming support of the majority opinion in the country. The food problem and inflation, Sir Jeremy observed, were closely connected and the one could not be solved without dealing with the other. The two were really two aspects of the same problem, but both could be tackled simultaneously, and that was why the Government of India had been trying to do. He thought relief would come in two ways. It would come by some expansion of production in the country even during the present difficulties and Government were continually at work to promote such expansion. It would also come by increased shipping which could be allotted to India in the further stages of the war. Finally an attempt had to be made now, even to some extent at the expense of India's war effort to switch back the productive resources of the country to meeting the consumers' demands. The need of the home front had become extremely important to the internal economy of the country. The position now is that we have reached a stage at which in order to maintain the war effort, it is necessary to cater for civilian requirements: otherwise civilian morale will undoubtedly suffer. These are considerations which are very present to the Government of India, but I would ask critics to realize there are so many factors which are beyond our control". The Government of India, he said, would continue to press India's demands for the requirements of the civilian consumer and they hoped that they would be able to produce a marked improvement in the situation.

HINDU MARRIAGES BETWEEN SAME GOTRA

10th. NOVEMBER :—Marriages between Hindus of the same "Gotra" or "Pravar" or Hindus belonging to different sub-divisions of the same caste, were sought to be legalized by a bill which, Dr. Govind Deshmukh moved today, should be referred to a select committee. The House discussed the motion for over three hours. Sir Asoka Roy, Law Member, opposing the motion declared that piecemeal legislation of the kind attempted by the mover should not be undertaken when comprehensive legislation such as had been prepared by the Rao Committee on Marriage was on the anvil, that Hindu opinion was sharply divided on the merits of Dr. Deshmukh's Bill, that the Special Marriage Act was available to those who wished to marry within the same gotra and it was not open to people to come to the Legislature and insist on sacramental marriage and ask the House to change the law for their benefit. The Law Member gave the assurance that he would do whatever was possible to see that the Rao Committee's Bill was brought before the House's next session and taken to its next stage. Dr. Deshmukh expressed satisfaction with this assurance and withdrew his motion.

BLAIR'S RETIREMENT & HITAVADA ORDER

During question time today, the retirement of Mr. J. R. Blair, formerly Chief Secretary, Bengal Government and the order issued on the *Hitavada* of Nagpur in connexion with it were the subject of a question by Dr. Govind Deshmukh. The Home Member said that the retirement was voluntary and was in no way connected with any breach of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules. The Government of the C. P. were asked to obtain from the editor of the "*Hitavada*" information as to the source of an article entitled "Another Civilian Resigns, Story of a Censored Letter," which appeared in the issue of that newspaper dated Aug. 2. This article purported to disclose the working of the censorship and it was clearly necessary in the interests of military security as well as in the public interest to investigate its origin. The C. P. Government were accordingly authorized to resort to DI Rule 116 if the editor declined to give this information voluntarily.

The same Member asked whether it had been brought to the notice of HMG that if Italian prisoners were sent out of India, it would release a considerable amount of food for the consumption of the Army as well as the civilian population. Mr. C. M. Trivedi, War Secretary, answered that the question was still under consideration in consultation with HMG.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the standard of treatment given to Italian and other prisoners of war approximates more or less to the traditional

standard of hospitality given to sons-in-law in Indian households? (Laughter).

Mr. Trivedi: The treatment is governed by International Conventions.

NUMBER OF SECURITY PRISONERS

The number of security prisoners of all sorts in detention on January 1, 1943, was 9,853, said the *Home Member* in reply to Mr. A. N. Chottopadhyaya. The number on September 1 last was 10,780, but it was understood that a good many prisoners had been released since that date. The number of State prisoners detained under Regulation III of 1818 on September 30, 1943, was 10. No such prisoners were released during 1943. He had no information as to the number of prisoners detained under the Regulation or released by Provincial Governments. So far as he was aware, no special tribunals for examining the cases of persons detained under the DI Rules were at present in existence. The cases of these persons were however, under constant review by the Governments concerned, both Central and Provincial, and a number of persons had been released from detention as a result of these reviews.

The *Home Member*, in a statement in reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi, gave the number of persons undergoing imprisonment in connexion with the Congress movement in all Provinces on Sept. 1, 1943 as 19,281, and those undergoing detention as 8,073. The number of security prisoners released was 7,447. Except in the case of one news-paper, on which a pre-censorship order was served by a Provincial Government, there had been no censorship of news or comment appearing in the Indian Press about famine conditions in the country or deaths resulting from starvation in Bengal and other places, said *Sir Sultan Ahmed* in reply to Mr. K. C. Neogy. In so far as publicity in the Press outside India was concerned, the Government of India had no information either as to its volume or tone other than that contained in cabled reports to India, which had appeared in the Indian Press. The house then adjourned till Friday.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

12th. NOVEMBER :—Initiating the debate to-day on the food situation in the country *Sir J. P. Srivastava*, Food Member, Government of India, said that as against the Bengal Governor's estimate of province's requirements for the three months, October to December of 250,000 tons, 82,000 tons were sent during October. "We hope our arrangements will secure that the figure given by the Governor will be substantially exceeded," he said. The daily average rate of arrival of foodgrains and pulses into Calcutta during the period June to October was over 3,300 tons per day as against a daily average of 1,600 tons for the corresponding period of last year. In addition to the amounts which the Provincial Government were now sending out to the districts they had a month's reserve of foodgrains for Calcutta itself. As regards distribution to districts, despatches had during the last month risen from a few hundred tons to a thousand tons a day in addition to the arrangements which had been made to send from the Punjab direct to the districts a large quantity of wheat products. Arrangements were now in progress to double this figure. "We attach the greatest importance to two points in Bengal, namely, the rationing of Calcutta and the procurement of the aman crop. Our Rationing Adviser has gone to Bengal on more than one occasion and remained there for considerable periods working in close co-operation with the Provincial authorities on the gigantic task of preparing the Calcutta rationing scheme, which, I hope, will very shortly be in operation. We have also sent a senior officer of the Department to collaborate with the Provincial Government in the preparation of their "aman" procurement scheme, the final details of which are now under urgent consideration." Although to some extent the Department had been unavoidably preoccupied with the situation in Bengal they had constantly kept before them the needs of Travancore, Cochin, Bombay, the Deccan States and Madras. The Food Member referred earlier to the revised basic plan which came into operation from August 1, aimed at the distribution of 1,400,000 tons of foodgrains, to deficit areas within the period of eight months ending in March, 1944. During the first three months of its operation, over 650,000 tons had been despatched to the deficit areas. The principal recipients had been Bengal with 219,000 tons, Bombay 76,000 tons, Madras 7,000 tons, Travancore-Cochin 46,000 tons, and the Deccan States 6,500 tons. He acknowledged with gratitude the additional surpluses voluntarily declared by provinces and States subsequent to the formulation of the revised basic plan which amounted to 220,000 tons. Referring to imports, he said his latest information was that

41,000 tons of foodgrains had already arrived and far greater quantities were on the way. He acknowledged the generous offers of assistance received from Australia, Canada, S Africa and New Zealand and thanked the C-in-C for the help given in the task of distribution. "In our price policy," he declared, "we have no intention of pushing down prices below a level where they give a fair return to the producer and we intend by every means in our power to protect the producer against undue rise in prices of the commodities which he requires. We intend to remove progressively those price divergencies in different areas which give rise to so much heart burning. But we are convinced that control of the prices of foodgrains is as essential factor not only in the feeding of the poor but in the whole economic structure of the country." Stressing the importance of increasing the country's resources by an intensification of the "Grow More Food" campaign he mentioned that according to the first all-India rice forecast, the acreage under rice alone had gone up by about four million. So far the condition of rice and other kharif crops or millets and maize has been reported good almost without exception throughout the country. "I cannot be satisfied and shall never be satisfied so long as hunger and distress exist. I claim that we have been successful in maintaining a steady flow of grain from surplus to deficit areas according to prearranged programmes. The delivery of grain to most of the deficit areas has enabled them, with the assistance of their own efforts, to keep the situation under control and in Bengal we are able to show a considerable improvement in the supply position.

Three amendments were moved after the Food Member's speech, urging that the food situation be taken into consideration. One moved by Mr. *Abdur Rashid Chaudhry* (Unattached) asked for a committee of inquiry of the Central Legislature with an elected majority to report on the situation; the second by Sir *Mohammad Yamin Khan*, (League) urged the appointment of a Royal Commission, and the third by Mr. *K. C. Neogy*, recommended the appointment of a committee consisting of eminent economists, judges, administrators and an accountant-general under the chairmanship of a lawyer who has held high judicial office to inquire into a number of points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions. Mr. *Chaudhry* declared that the blame for Bengal's distress lay with the bureaucracy. He deplored the apathy of the British public and referred to the fact that only 35 members were present in Parliament when the food debate was held.

Mr. *C. P. Lawson* (European Group) demanded an inquiry to be conducted by some non-political and unbiased body. The time for it was to be chosen so that, consistent with arriving at the earliest possible conclusion, no interruption took place in the urgent efforts which were being made to remedy the situation. Emphasizing the absence of consumer goods as a factor preventing the free flow of foodgrains he thought that while many shiploads of wheat from Australia or Canada might be urgently needed, one tanker of kerosene oil might result in the release of many shiploads of wheat from the hands of stockists in this country. A shipload of bicycles might be worth many cargoes of grain.

Mr. *Shamlal* (Congress) explained that his party's decision to keep away from the Assembly was not for all time and that the subject of food was one on which the Party ought to make its voice heard. The House adjourned at this stage.

TRADE UNIONS ACT AMEND. BILL

13th. NOVEMBER :—The Assembly today dealt with five official Bills. One of them was Dr. *Ambedkar's* Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, providing mainly for compulsory recognition of Trade Unions under certain conditions and defining what recognition would imply. The House agreed to circulate the Bill for eliciting public opinion. Mr. *Griffiths*, while supporting circulation of the Bill, criticized certain of its provisions and characterized it as nebulous, uncertain and indefinite in many parts. He took particular objection to giving protection to labour and treating them as hot-house plants instead of leaving it to labour as in Britain to build up Trade Unions which were reasonable, representative and efficient. *Maulvi Abdul Ghani* objected to the provision that communal Trade Unions should not be recognized. Mr. *N. M. Joshi* declared that employers had shown hostility to the Trade Union movement and that was the reason why the Bill was needed. Employers in many cases insisted not only on Trade Unions being representatives but wanted Trade Unions to have no politics whatever. Sir *Gurunath Bewoor*, Secretary, Posts and Air, replying to criticisms of the Posts and Telegraph Department's attitude to Trade Unions said that the Department was in fact the first to recognize Trade Unions. He imagined that one

of the reasons why the provisions of the present Bill were not meant to be made immediately applicable to labour employed by the Crown, by a Federal Railway or a major port, was that Government already had well-established rules for recognition of Government Servants' Unions. Sir *Cowasji Jehangir* declared that the worth of a Trade Union depended upon its leaders and that all Trade Union leaders in India were not of the same calibre as Mr. Joshi or Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Dr. *Ambedkar*, replying mainly to Mr. Griffiths' criticisms, pointed out that there was nothing indefinite about the conditions on which recognition was to be given to Trade Unions. The representative character of a Union would be decided by a Tripartite Board to be set up under the Bill. That Board would go into all the relevant circumstances, including, if necessary, the private character of the leaders of a Union. As regards the provision about labour employed by Government, he explained there was really no exemption for them. What was provided was that a date would be fixed when the provisions would be made applicable to them as well. The motion that the Bill be circulated was agreed to.

OTHER OFFICIAL BILLS

The House passed the *Home Member's* Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, the Law Member's two Bills further to amend the Cr.P.C. and a Bill to make certain provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by a High Court exercising original jurisdiction. The House then adjourned till the 15th.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

15th. NOVEMBER :—The Chair ruled at the outset that the amendment of Mr. Shambhu Dayal Misra (Congress), urging the public trial of Lord Linlithgow, Mr. L. S. Amery and Sir John Herbert, was out of order and could not be moved.

Mr. *Shamlal* (Congress) concluding his unfinished speech of Friday asserted that only a National Government could successfully deal with the situation and was the supreme need of the hour.

Mr. *K. C. Neogy* declared that the famine bore "the hall-mark of genuine British manufacture." On an earlier occasion, Opposition members had tried to rouse Government to the need of taking prompt action to prevent the Bengal tragedy. It had been said that things had been made difficult by the division of responsibility between the provinces and the Centre. Were it a question of repression the Government of India had only to press a button in New Delhi and the whole thing was done swiftly and efficiently, but not when it was a question of saving lives. Replying to the contention that growth of population was the real difficulty, he said that during three centuries, the population of Britain had increased more than eight times as against that of India which had been four times. In 50 years the total increase in India was about 39% as against 186% in the USA. It was also revealed by figures that the yield per acre of land in Bengal had not progressed since the days of Akbar, although Japan with the same problems of over-population and uneconomic holdings had a yield per acre of three times that of Bengal; and China more than double that of Bengal. As for hoarding not more than 10% of the agricultural population could have anything like a surplus. He granted that the reserves built by European industrial concerns in Bengal might not be very large in quantity; but it was not so much the quantity that mattered as the simultaneous withdrawal of foodgrains by different competing parties. Hundreds of European employers in Bengal contributed to the shortage. They made a mad rush to secure grain; and every European employer was engaged, according to Government, in essential war work and, therefore, entitled to build up food reserves.

Sir Jogendra Singh, Member for Education, Health and Lands, said the impression he had formed as a result of his visit to Bengal was that the clouds were lifting: grain from outside was not only now flowing into Calcutta but into remote towns in a steady stream. The charities organized by the people of Calcutta and outside had done a great deal of succour and to save. A rich harvest of rice would soon be ready. He declared that he was not satisfied with the constitutional position in which the Centre had no direct responsibility in the fruitful fields of education, agriculture and health. "If India is to resolve the economic deadlock it must have centralized direction, centralized finance and decentralized activities. I feel that unless we at the Centre guide the emergent forces which are raging in full blast in all the countries of the world, we shall fail entirely in advancing the economic interests of this vast continent. The strategy of the future must aim at production of food and goods. We are worried about the increased circulation of money. We ought to worry more about increasing the production of goods."

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi traced the present food famine in Bengal to the policy of denial put into operation by the ex-Governor, Sir John Herbert. He said that the removal of rice and the destruction of boats and other means of conveyance in the SE districts had led to a breakdown of normal trade channels in those parts which gradually affected other parts also. He urged greater imports from abroad and the taking over of the control of food matters by the Government of India. He advised the Government not to disturb the aman crop by making any purchases but to let it flow freely into the market.

Chowdhury Mohd Ismail Khan said that the responsibility for the Bengal famine ultimately rested with the British Government. If the Indian Ministers were wrong, why did the Governors intervene and stop the rot? He thought that the Indian Members of the Government of India had not discharged their duties properly. Some months ago when the life of a single man was at stake, three of them vanished from the Government benches; but now when hundreds of thousands were dying of forced starvation the Indian Members were sitting opposite "as cool as cucumbers." He added: "People clamoured for food but the Government gave them wood—Maj-Gen Wood," (Laughter). His complaint against the economic experts was that they had not drawn the attention of their employers in good time to the great catastrophe to which the country was heading. He supported the demand for a Royal Commission. He also asked the Government to "capture or corner" the aman crop in Bengal.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta charged the Government with neglect and complacency and called upon the Indian Members to "get out" if they could not do better than they had done in the past. In the face of terrible reality, those Indian Members had no right to ask people to have consideration for the Government's difficulties. He was prepared, however, to absolve even the Government from a deliberate policy of starvation; but hoarders and profiteers, zamindars and capitalists, were deliberately robbing and fleeing and starving their own countrymen. The Punjab, he declared, had starved Bengal.

Sardar Mangal Singh stoutly defending the Punjab, said that profiteers and hoarders should be punished along with the members of the Government of India. He stated that at the end of June 1,58,000 tons of wheat released by the Punjab remained to be dispatched to Bengal. What, he asked, did it show? Was it a case of hoarding by the Punjab zamindar or holding up of grain by the Railway Members?

Sir Edward Benthall: May I inform the Hon. Member that all that wheat is in Bengal.

Sardar Mangal Singh replied that that might be the case now. The Punjab zamindar, he asserted, was not profiteering either. Who, he asked, was pocketing the difference of Rs. 10 between the price at which wheat was bought in the Punjab and *atta* sold in Bengal? The demand for a Royal Commission, he characterized, as a trap. He said he could say in advance what a Royal Commission would recommend. Their very first finding would be that the transfer of power to Indians was a mistake. The country, therefore, did not want a Royal Commission. The country knew who the real culprit was. It was the Government which had encouraged undesirable elements in the country. It should now seek a solution of the difficulty by getting the help of the real representatives of the people, Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They were the people who could solve the problem.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: They are as much responsible for the muddle as the Government

Mr. L. C. Gwilt (European Group) said the food emergency which exist and would continue to exist not only until the gathering of the aman rice crop in a few weeks time, but for the next several years, called for the greatest measure of national unity. Unless there was a rapid change in the attitude of some of the "surplus" provinces, and national co-operation to assist towards procurement, the future must hold the most serious consequences from which India might take a generation to recover. He appealed to all to avoid permitting the state of Bengal to degenerate into a political issue, and asked the Press to devote space to "what is right in the rationed areas as they have done in the past to what is wrong in Bengal." He asked the Central Government not to supply the imported grain to any province which had not shown their bonafides in introducing an efficient measure of food control or rationing. He suggested that senior appointments in the provincial food administration be made by the Public Services Commission. Agriculture should be transferred from the Department of Education, Health and Lands to the Food Department, or a separate portfolio for it created.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir thought that the deficit of 2,500,000 tons given for the whole of India was an error and that it should not be really more than 1,500,000 tons. From what he had seen and learned in his own province of Bombay, the only method of procurement was to take grains direct from the cultivator's hands. He did not know what were the "political risks" to which the Gregory Report referred in dealing with these proposals. The revenue officers were there to buy grains from the cultivators at a fair and equitable price. There were difficulties, he granted, but he hoped that the Central Government would bring this suggestion to the attention of the provincial Governments and that Bombay at least would adopt it and show the way for procurement as it had shown the way for rationing. He endorsed the plan of rationing as the only equitable method of distribution, and he was glad to hear from Mr. Kirby that a principle of rationing was that there must be a month's stock and a likelihood of maintaining that stock.

Mr. N. Sivaraj declared: "Whatever the position of India in the British Empire and whatever her constitutional status among other parts of the Empire, the fact remains that India is today on a war basis on account of the responsibility forced upon it by the British Government. It is my contention that those who took this responsibility of declaring war have also to bear the responsibility of finding food supplies for the civil population of India." During the war, he added, such initiative as that of the Government of India had been taken away by HMG. and in that particular case of food, he blamed HMG. Referring to the demand for a Royal Commission, Mr. Sivaraj said: "I feel that such a Commission will be useful only at a later stage. I think it is of no use at all at the present moment." During the war food must become a Central responsibility, and if it was necessary to amend the Government of India Act in order to confer such power on the Government of India, he would ask the Government to approach the Secretary of State to have the Act amended. Mr. Sivaraj concluded by commending the work done by the Madras Food Council in introducing rationing in the city and procure supplies for that purpose.

16th. NOVEMBER :—Mr. R. H. Hutchings, Secretary, Food Department, Government of India said that the prime need was not to continue singing about what should be done but to lay down broad principles and agree on a coherent policy which would make allowances for special conditions and emergencies and apply that policy consistently throughout the country. He claimed that that was the aim of the Food Department today. The most important feature of the situation was psychological. The situation was now different from what it was a year ago. They now had a policy which they did not have before. The Administration were far more alive to their duties and responsibilities than before: the public itself was beginning to realize that food was no longer a subject which could be made the sport of political ambition or financial ingenuity and at least one High Court had given a salutary judgment. The House would shortly see other measures which Government had in preparation to teach the same lesson. The problem was in essence an administrative one. Food must become the first priority subject for the time being of all administrations; the whole resources of those administrations should be focussed upon it in all its different and connected aspects. One of the most important points was the effective application of the Foodgrains Control Order. (Voices: How far have you succeeded.) Mr. Hutchings pointed out that the administration of that Order was a provincial matter. It was still open to amendment, and if members had any amendments to propose he would welcome them. But the Order was the basis on which stocks in each province could be located and assessed. That should form the basis of any sound food administration. Next to it came price control. "Price control must, we believe, not only be supported by control of other commodities and the attempt to supply consumer goods, but it must be accepted throughout India in principle and we will neglect nothing to make it effective." Referring to rationing he said that experience had shown that wherever it had been introduced it had been successful and it had been welcomed by the great majority of the people.

Mr. Hossainbhai Lalji, leader of the Independent Party, said that during the last four years food had been taken out of India in quantities which had not been disclosed. Whereas figures of military consumption had been published, figures of export during the last four years were not reliable. He could not understand why Government now waxed so eloquent in thanking the countries who had come to India's help. Why did nobody thank India when food was going out from here?

Dr. G. Deshmukh (Congress) said that his concern was not so much with the

deaths of yesterday but with the deaths of to-morrow, for the problem of Bengal might soon be the problem of the whole of India. He suspected it was a famine brought on according to plan. For how else can you explain the binding on the part of the Government.

Sir Frederick James expressed the view that everybody who was in public life during the past two years must share to some extent the blame for the present situation. About rationing he asked if it applied to all alike. He asked that question because in Bangalore certain classes of dependants of military officers get rations which in some cases were even 12 times the amount given to the civil population. His inquiries showed that the military authorities in Bangalore were perfectly willing to apply exactly the same scale of rationing to dependants of military officers but they must be approached by the civil administration in the matter. The civil administration was that of the Central Government and he asked why it was not moving. *Sir Frederick* then referred to the extravagance in restaurants and hotels in Calcutta and Delhi. In the Middle East which he and others visited recently when there was a shortage of meat four meatless days were ordered for all alike. Had anybody ever thought of a riceless day in India? Profiteers in the Middle East received short shrift. He had seen 12 of them exhibited with chains on a platform in a public street exposed to the derision of the people. Why, he asked, should there not be a nation-wide campaign of austerity? Starvation and misery among the ordinary people were sowing seeds of discontent which would be reaped in a wretched and unpleasant harvest in this country. There was a good deal of waste in military circles. He knew of a case in which a distinguished scientist was approached by the authorities of a prisoners of war camp to tell them how to make compost out of surplus bread. That was when people were starving. The GOC-in-C., Southern Army, however, had taken the matter in hand and *Sir Frederick* expected that something would be done to set it right. *Sir Frederick* asked for medical relief to the affected areas so that the younger generation might be helped to get over the effects of starvation. He held that this situation in India was the responsibility not only of the administration in India, not only of the British Government which had direct and primary responsibility, but also of the United Nations' war. A satisfactory feature of the crisis was the instant and willing response from various countries but that response could not be carried into effect unless the United Nations decided that the supply to India had first priority in their war effort.

Sir Edward Benthall, Member for War Transport, refuted allegations that lack of transport facilities was responsible for the Bengal crisis. He gave figures to prove his plea that there were enough wagons available in the Punjab, but very often there were no foodgrains to transport. In any case, said *Sir Edward*, there had been no complaints since August last, and the fact that the Punjab had been claiming that it had exported foodgrains out of all proportion showed that transport had been made available. The time, he said, might come when due to imports and new crops, hoarders might hasten to dispose of their stocks. There might be some difficulty in meeting such a situation. He assured *Sir Frederick James* that the needs of Travancore and Cochin were very much in the mind of the Government and arrangements would be made to transport foodgrains to those two States and for which purpose a detailed programme was being worked out. Referring to Bengal, *Sir Edward* said that adequate arrangements had existed to deliver foodgrains to Calcutta, but often no foodgrains were available for transport. Government had provided 30 wagons daily to transport foodgrains from Calcutta to the E districts. In addition to this arrangements had been made to transport 500 tons of foodgrains by rail and 325 tons by steamer from N to E daily. Arrangements had also been made for transport of the aman crop in Bengal. With these arrangements, it was hoped steady improvement would be made in the Bengal situation. He declared that food must be moved and would be moved.

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan said: "It is sad commentary on Lord Linlithgow's Viceroyalty that a man who had come out to India with hopes and promises to improve the lot of the agriculturist should leave its shores with the worst famine that has faced this country. If Lord Linlithgow had devoted more time to the economic conditions of India than to the geographical unity of this country, things may not have drifted to their present state. Lord Linlithgow never realized his responsibility and duty, for if the military can give assistance today, it could have done so four months ago with the result that thousands of lives might have been saved. The Nawabzada paid a warm tribute to Lord Wavell for his prompt action in dealing with the Bengal situation. He disputed the statement

of Sir Edward Benthall that transport was available for moving foodgrains from Calcutta. As for the "Grow More Food" campaign, he said that the large acreage under foodgrains was possible at the cost of cotton which was no longer wanted by Japan. There were 2000,000 acres of fallow land lying in Assam which could produce 1,000,000 mds. foodgrains at least. The Government had never thought of putting it under cultivation. The Nawabzada concluded by saying that the whole responsibility for the present state of affairs lay with the British Government which had dragged India into the war and made her into a base of operations. Bengal had become a frontier and it was the duty of India and the Empire to save Bengal. The Government of India must help Bengal financially to save the lives of millions of human beings.

OFFICIAL BILLS

17th. NOVEMBER :—The Assembly today disposed of the four remaining official Bills and devoted the rest of the sitting to discussing the food crisis. The House passed *Sir Aziz-ul-Haque's* two Bills, one to amend the Indian Tea Control Act and the other to amend the Indian Companies Act.

The *Finance Member's* Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Central excise duties was referred to a select committee; and the *Law Member's* motion for circulation of the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, as reported by the joint committee, was passed.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh complained of heavy exports of foodgrains from the C. P. and asked that the food supplies to Italian and other foreign prisoners of war quartered in India should be HMG's responsibility. He expressed disagreement with those who were clamouring for the reduction of prices of agricultural commodities. He was not against fixing prices but in that process several factors, such as the cultivator's needs for his family's sustenance, education, medicine, seed for the next year's crop and provision for possible failure of crops should be borne in mind.

Sir Ziauddin Ahmed said that wastage of food should be made a criminal offence. He complained against the way in which the Food Department have ignored members of the House in choosing the personnel of conferences and committees and alleged that this was done because the department finds members of the House very inconvenient in their criticisms. More shiploads of wheat were expected to arrive in this country shortly, said the Food Member, *Sir J. P. Srivastava*, replying to *Khan Bahadur Shabbhan*, during question time today. It was not in the public interest, he said, to reveal either the quantities expected or the name of the countries from where imports had been arranged. The Food Member informed Mr. Essak Sait that so far as Orissa was concerned, it was expected that the winter rice crop would relieve the situation. As for Bombay, the Government of India were taking steps to supply foodgrains from surplus areas as well as foodgrains imported from abroad. In addition, the provincial Government was taking measures to procure considerable part of the crops which were being harvested or would be harvested shortly. Steps had also been taken to supply Madras with millets, but the position there was reported to have improved considerably. "The Government of India agree as to the importance of ensuring that certain conditions exist when statutory price control is introduced," said *Sir J. P. Srivastava* in reply to a question by Dr. *Govind Deshmukh*. In the present emergent conditions, all-India statutory prices for all foodgrains are an impossibility. The Government of India have therefore, decided that, pending the enforcement of statutory control of the prices throughout India, such provinces as desire to enforce statutory control should be permitted to do so subject, however, to the approval of the statutory price by the Central Government. These decisions apply to all provinces without exception."

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, replying to Mr. K. C. Neogy, said that 1940 was the peak year for coal production in India. Since then production had fallen slightly year by year. The fall assumed serious proportions for June 1943. Compared with the corresponding months of 1942, the output in June, July and August of this year fell by about 353,000 tons each month, while September showed a decrease of 299,000 tons. Mentioning the principal steps taken to improve the situation, Dr. Ambedkar said: "More wagons have been provided to take away coal particularly in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields. Efforts are being made to ensure the prompt delivery of colliery stores and machinery. Women have, since

August, been permitted to work underground in the C. P. and Berar coalfields. "Action has been taken to prevent interference with colliery labour from military activities in the coalfields. Schemes are under preparation for providing a greater quantity of consumer goods for collieries and, in particular, of food and arrangements are being made to ensure an adequate ration at concession rates to the miners. Welfare officers are about to be appointed in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields to promote the health and general welfare of miners."

The decline in output was due mainly to the shortage of labour which was drawn away by the "Grow More Food" campaign and by military works in the vicinity, added the Labour Member. An increase in output of coal was necessary to meet the internal requirements of Indian industry and essential consumers.

Sardar Sant Singh repudiated the charge in hoarding and profiteering made against the Punjab. As regards hoarding, he gave figures which, he said, proved that wheat was coming freely to the markets in the Punjab. As regards profiteering, he declared that he knew, that the Bengal Government made profits. He also knew that the Central Government made a profit of Rs. 1-2 a md. on wheat brought from the Punjab and sold to Bengal, and in this way made a profit of Rs. 1 crore. Was the Finance Member prepared to deny that?

Sir Jeremy Ratsman was heard to remark that he was prepared to give Rs. 10 for every one which *Sardar Sant Singh* alleged had been made by the Central Government.

Sardar Sant Singh went on to repeat the charge against the Central Government.

The Finance Member, interrupting him again, asked if he supported taxation by Government to cover themselves against loss on food supplies.

The Food Member remarked that what *Sardar Sant Singh* said was ancient history and that he would give a reply in due course,

Sardar Sant Singh charged the millers of Bengal with making large profits. (*Sir Henry Richardson*: Untrue). Referring to the War Transport Member's statement about empty wagons coming from the Punjab because no wheat was forthcoming, *Sardar Sant Singh* gave figures of wheat which he said was lying in stations in the Punjab for want of wagons.

The debate was adjourned at this stage.

18th. NOVEMBER:—The Assembly today concluded the debate on the food crisis in India when all amendments to the Food Member's proposal (on the first day of the debate), that the food situation be taken into consideration by the House, were rejected.

The Muslim League's amendment asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission was rejected by 41 votes to 26, the Congress Party, the Nationalists and some unattached members not voting. The other amendments were all rejected without a division.

Sir J. P. Srivastava (Food Member), replying on the debate, said he was not prepared to accept any of the amendments. This, he declared, was not the time for any inquiry. He was not, however, baulking or avoiding an inquiry being undertaken at the proper time, and he would place before HMG a full report of the debate in this House.

The debate began with a speech by *Sir Aziz-ul-Haque* who replied to references made to his administration of the Food Department before he became Commerce Member. He said that from January to June this year, the monthly average mortality rate in Calcutta was less than the average of the preceding five years, and it was difficult for him to believe at that time that a crisis was impending in Bengal. But the Food Department were not complacent or idle; they took what steps were possible to have a co-ordinated and concerted policy; they set up a long-range Planning Committee; tried to arrange for imports and so on. There had been a reference, he said, to the export of foodgrains by the UKCO, which, it was said, had denuded India of foodgrains.

Sir A. H. Ghuznavi: "It is correct."

Sir Aziz-ul-Haque declared it was not correct to any extent. The UKCO did not take any grains away except perhaps 100 tons to Persia.

Mr. Jinnah interrupting asked what was the total quantity exported.

Sir Aziz ul said that the Food Member would give up-to-date figures in the course of his reply.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: "Has the Hon. Member read *Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas*' minute to the Gregory Committee's report?"

Mistakes and miscalculations, *Sir Aziz-ul* continued, had been made, but never deliberately; they were ordinary incidents of life. As a result of action in

the direction of control taken in recent months, the price of a number of articles had come down.

Sir Henry Richardson, Leader of the European Group, while generally favouring an inquiry at a suitable time by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission, declared that there was much to be done here and now by the Central and Provincial Governments and by the public. He thought that the Gregory Report was a blue print, and the important thing was to stick to its proposals and implement them without further hesitation of chopping and changing. Referring to some of its recommendations, Sir Henry asked whether the Central Government were satisfied with the measure of co-operation received from provinces, and, if not, what steps they proposed to take in the matter. About procurement, he said that the most important thing was to allay panic among agriculturists and to make them realize that high prices would not last for ever. In Bengal, he suggested that Government should announce that Calcutta would be fed by imports from outside the province so that foodstuffs in the mofussil would be available for mofussil needs. For generations cultivators in many parts of India had been burdened with debt; here at last was a chance if they were wise to make a new start to become creditors rather than debtors and to learn those habits of thrift which, in other agricultural countries of the world, were the most stable foundations of the State. He would like to see a future established whereby the agriculturist would have easy access to farm implements, improved seeds, good housing, good education, medical benefits and the many other vital needs which hitherto had remained unsatisfied. On the side of production, he urged that among other things India should follow the example of the allotment movement in Britain. Advocating rationing, he said that a particular province could not dispense with rationing merely because it was a surplus province. No town anywhere in the world was a surplus area and the mere fact that a town was situated, say, in the Punjab, rather than in Bengal, could not constitute a logical reason for excluding it from the rationing system. "Rationing" he asserted, "is not just an expedient to carry us for the next few months: we are not dealing with a purely temporary emergency which will be at an end when the aman harvest has been gathered in. We are dealing with a problem which is likely to continue for some years to come. There is a world shortage of food and the demands from the devastated areas after the war will require the utmost human endeavour to meet them. India which is more nearly self-sufficient in food than many countries in the world, will have to make every effort to live on her own resources and this can only be done if a sound system of rationing is introduced now and maintained until the period of world shortage is over." He refuted the charge of hoarding by capitalists and employers in Bengal and said that if the worst charge against capitalists was that they had made certain that their labour force would be fed, he for one would not blush.

Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Supply Member, speaking amid many interruptions made a vigorous and eloquent presentation of Government's case. He conceded that a certain amount of indignation on the part of members was natural and it was not right that with a calamity of this kind facing the country, any member should stand up and say in a spirit of self-righteousness that the Government had done its best. He wanted to suggest remedies for the situation rather than dwell on the difficulties of the past but in order to meet the statements that the Government was devoid of any policy and was callous and inconsiderate, inefficient and lacking in foresight, he would make a very brief review of what Government had done. It was not true that the food question was thought of only when the Food Department was established. The war began on September 3, 1939, and on September 9, 1939, authority was delegated to Provincial Governments, giving them power to control the price of various foodstuffs and other necessities of life. Within six weeks of the declaration of war, the first Price Control Conference, which was really a Food Conference, was called. Agricultural prices at that time were in a depressed state, and when the conference was summoned, commercial bodies were all unanimous, and many provinces were also of the view that there should be no control of prices of foodstuffs. The Bombay Government was the first to take advantage of the delegation of authority, and within a few days the Congress Ministry that was in power at that time enforced the Price Control Order. The Bombay Government's policy had always been to let the agriculturist realize a fair share of prices and at the same time take into account the interests of the consumer. He should like to single out the Bombay Government for its far-sighted policy throughout.

In 1940 there was a relapse in prices, and in 1941 prices were again shooting up in a manner that was unfair to the consumer. On Dec 5, 1941, the price control on wheat was opposed. The Government of India at that time were helped by the parity of prices prevailing between the main wheat-producing provinces of the Punjab, the U. P. and Sind. In Feb. 1942 the next Price Control Conference was held. Burma was in danger of invasion and the question whether rice should be controlled was considered. All the rice-growing provinces felt the time had not come, but Government foresaw the deficiency and one of their first act was to maintain a shuttle steamer service to bring to India as much Burma rice as possible before occupation. (A voice: How much rice did you get?). Sir Ramaswami said he had not the figures at the moment.

A Member "Nothing".

Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar: "Whas is the good of your saying 'nothing' 'knowing nothing'?" (Laughter).

In April 1942 (he went on) the next Price Control Conference was called and a regional system of price control for rice was evolved and in May the Foodgrains Control Order was issued designed to prevent hoarding and profiteering and making other provisions.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir. "How many Provincial Governments were under Sec. 93 then?"

Sir Ramaswami: "That information is available to the Hon. Member as much as to me. If the suggestion is that some of the Sec. 93 provinces did not carry out this Ordinance, he is right.

Mr. Jinnah. "What were you doing?"

A voice: "He was doing his best." (Laughter).

Mr. Jinnah: "I meant to ask what was the Government of India doing?"

Sir Ramaswami said the Government of India were asking the provinces to take action suggesting to them on what lines to proceed. The Provincial Governments pleaded they were arranging staff, building up the machinery for enforcing the Order and making other arrangements.

Sir Ramaswami proceeded to say that there had been too much concentration on the fact that sufficient grain was not going to Bengal and not much on the more vital question of the price and whether because of the price there was starvation in the midst of plenty.

Several voices: "Who is responsible?"

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta: "Inflation."

Sir Ramaswami said that Provincial Governments might be responsible: the profiteer and the boarder might be responsible, but he knew of one group of persons who brought it about. That was those who went about in the villages and told the agriculturists: "Don't sell grains, don't accept currency notes." If there was pre-determined famine in this country, he knew of one group of persons who preconceived, pre-determined and planned to bring about this condition. (Loud cheers greeted these remarks, in the midst of which Dr. Govind Deshmukh and Mr. Abdul Qayum from the Congress benches stood up to protest against the remarks.)

Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar: "My hon. friends do not know to whom I am referring and still they are protesting. Do they feel my remarks apply to them?" (Renewed cheers and further protests.)

Dr. Deshmukh: "It doesn't matter to whom he is referring: they are my countrymen." Sir Ramaswami: "They are also my countrymen." (More cheers).

He proceeded to emphasize that we must get back to the position of statutory price control for all foodstuffs. That was the first essential. The second essential was rationing. He was convinced that rationing in rural areas was not possible. But the question had been continued in a peculiar way by the surplus and deficit provinces. The surplus provinces said why should we adopt rationing? He ventured to say to these provinces that it was a misconception. Where, he asked, was equality of sacrifice in such a position? To send your surplus to other provinces at a price which you could demand was no sacrifice, much less equality of sacrifice. Those that took up that position were not entitled to any credit. What else were they doing except keep their commercial contacts? (Cheers). Replying to the argument of inflation he pointed out that there was no inflation in the UK just as there was here. (Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. "No no") Currency notes worth £1,000,000,000 had been issued there without any backing but by strict rationing and price control, all that money had been immobilized. Everything had been rationed even furniture. Only utility furniture was available. "And even

that only if your house is bombed or you are going to try another wife" (Laughter). During these discussions (he went on) he felt there were occasional unnecessary political issues raised: even economic issues were complicated by the fear that some high political issue was going to be admitted or some political lesson about geographical unity was to be drawn from the economic situation. He would be hiding his head on the sands of prejudice, like an ostrich, if he believed that by these subtle methods and arguments grave issues which had to be resolved by medical adjustment could be settled. (Cheers).

Mr. Jinnah: "I hope you will take some measures by which you can impress this upon Lord Hailey."

Sir Ramaswami suggested it was hardly for him to undertake that Lord Hailey was a careful student of these matters.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee, the Nationalist Party leader, charged Government with an attempt to minimize the Gravity of the famine in Bengal. They avoided the use of the term famine, they manipulated figures to their own purpose, they gagged the Press both with regard to news and views, and now they were forcibly respecting destitutes from Calcutta with the ostensible object that the health of the city should not deteriorate but in reality to minimize the gravity of the situation. The effect of the general policy of concealing facts had been a slackening of action to cope with the disaster. "Had the truth been told, more vigorous help would have come from outside in time. It was according to him, "a Government-made famine," and the responsibility rested not with the Provincial Government alone on whom Mr. Amery had tried to shift the blame, but on the Government of India and the Secretary of State also. He suggested that to meet the emergency in Bengal there should be large imports into that province from other provinces and abroad and an equitable system of distribution under the auspices of a Provincial Food Council, adequate transport facilities for food being given the highest priority, and even suspension of the war needs for some time. The aman rice crop should not be tampered with by Government and should be distributed in the province outside Calcutta which should be fed by imports.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum, Deputy Leader, Congress Party, said he was not a believer in Royal Commissions. "In the eyes of the people of this country, the Government of Britain and their henchmen here, sitting opposite, are responsible for the calamity. It will be improper for us to ask those who are guilty to arrange for a Royal Commission to come at some distant time and whitewash their actions." The speaker quoted from Mr. Amery's statements and said that as late as January last it appeared that the British Government were fully conscious of the approaching calamity, but they refused to take any action. Even in the course of the recent Lords debate, Lord Huntingdon had pointed out that the dangers were fully foreseen. Referring to Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar's insinuations against the Congress Mr. Qaiyum asked what was wrong with the advice the Congress gave to the country. They knew the real conditions in the villages. They knew there would be inflation, a rise in prices, maldistribution and so on, and they therefore advised the agriculturist not to part with grain but to lay in stock for emergency. "Had we not given that advice, the conditions in the country would have been worse." The responsibility, he said, was primarily that of the British Government and their agents here. The British Government had thrown all responsibility on the Provincial Governments and had tried to make out a case against provincial autonomy or self-government, but he asked who was responsible for the monetary policy of the country, for exports, transport and the denial policy. There was one and only one answer to that, namely, the Central Government. He asked why exports were not stopped when the war started. "It is no use trying to get credit for having done something which could have been done before." He observed that when things went wrong, it was customary for the Government of India to take shelter behind provincial autonomy. While elsewhere in the world Governments had been planning ahead, Mr. Qaiyum remarked, it was news to him to hear that the Government of India now had a plan. (Laughter). He thought India's was the only Government which had no plan. Whatever measures they were taking would be a temporary palliative. A long-term policy could not be based on the opinions of economists imported from abroad. There was something called nationalism in economics and the job could only be done by Indian economists. "If the imported persons are really such good experts, why should their own country have spared them in war-time." (Laughter). Planning for self-sufficiency ought to have been done at the outbreak of the war, said the speaker. If only 2,000,000 acres of uncultivated land had been put under cultivation,

the present calamity would not have occurred. He also criticized the procurement methods of Government in allowing middle-men to function without check and control. Why should Government not buy direct from the producer, as was being done in Kashmir, and force the agriculturist to part with a portion of his produce, open Government shops and Government granaries, he asked.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah thought it a pity that one had to participate in the debate under the shadow of the tragedy in which thousands were dying. In January 1943, the Secretary of State made the statement that there was no danger of famine in India and that everything was all right. "May I know on whose authority he made that statement? Who supplied him with the information in January 1943 to enable him to make that solemn statement?" Referring to the Muslim League amendment, Mr. Jinnah said: "Out of our despair and helplessness and as a forlorn hope, by passing this amendment, you will say to those who want to understand, that we hold this Government *prima facie* guilty of gross neglect, lack of grip and foresight and colossal failure to discharge their responsibility." "You know you are guilty," he declared pointing to the Government benches. "If you don't know this much, then God help you." Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar had made an insinuation that there was a party which acted in such a manner that it became more difficult for the Central Government to formulate a policy which would have prevented such an appalling situation. If it was true there was such a party, a party which was playing this game, may be out of bitterness, or of ill-will or on political grounds, why did not the Government openly say this was happening? "So far as the Muslim League and the Muslims are concerned, we don't introduce any political issues, or make capital, financial or political. We know one thing. Our countrymen are dying and let me tell you, if the monsoon fails, then I don't know what will happen. It is no use saying that this is God's act. God has not yet intervened. (Cheers). He may. Therefore, be prepared to meet this intervention." "On behalf of the Muslim League," he said, "I can assure you we are prepared to give you every possible assistance, notwithstanding the fact that we condemn you that are guilty of failure to discharge your duty and have treated every party with contempt, kept it at arm's length and carried on as if you wanted that no party should co-operate with you and wanted to run your own show. All that will not stand in the way of our giving you the fullest co-operation. "In the three months, August, September and October, you have done a good bit with success. How were you able to do it? Could you not have done that before? Why did you not do it? I can only surmise. It is not the fairy god-mother, the present Food Member (laughter) that has come to our rescue. It is the military hand which believe in action that may have moved even this wooden, antidiluvian and incompetent Government to action." (Cheers).

The Food Member, Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava, in winding up the debate, said that he fully recognized the depth and sincerity of the feelings which had given rise to a desire for an inquiry. "I am prepared to accept that inquiry, of full and authoritative character, may be desirable; but I must make it perfectly clear that I am irrevocably opposed to any inquiry at the present time or in the immediate future for several reasons. I doubt, indeed, whether it would be practicable to constitute at the present time a committee or commission of adequate weight and status to deal with a question of this importance without calling away from urgent duties men who can ill be spared. Even if that consideration be unfounded, the mere statement that an inquiry is about to be held, and even more so the holding of that inquiry, cannot fail to distract Ministers and responsible officers from their pressing duties which ought to be and must be for some time to come directed solely towards the relief of famine conditions, the rehabilitation of the people and effective administration of food control. I fear also that it would at the present time increase bitterness of feeling, or at least revive and keep alive recrimination and militate against that concentration in the common effort which is so essential to the solution of the food problem. Our position is not that there cannot and must not be any inquiry, but while we are still in the midst of the emergency and the crisis is upon us and still continuing it is clearly impossible to determine when is the most appropriate or the earliest practicable time for the inquiry to begin. We cannot decide to what exact points that inquiry must be directed, nor in consequence can it be said what form the inquiry should take or who should conduct it. These points cannot be decided now. We do not know when the critical stage of our struggle will end nor what will be the result. "I have no desire to baulk or avoid an inquiry. Indeed, I am prepared to state that if an amendment in the terms described by Sir Henry Richardson had been

before the House, I should have been prepared to accept it. His amendment would have provided for an inquiry at a suitable date into the food shortage in India and in particular in Bengal. It was to have been conducted by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission of which the personnel was to be completely outside the field of Indian politics. Its terms of reference would have covered a full examination of the present food shortage and it would have made recommendations to prevent a recurrence of existing distress. Such an amendment would have been accepted by me; but I regret that I cannot accept any proposal which demands that an inquiry be held now which specifies the precise constitution of the committee or its terms of reference or binds me to institute an inquiry within a specified time. Government will vote therefore against the amendments which would have that effect." Sir Jwala disclosed that when he took over the Food Department, Calcutta was reported to have had a few days' stock. Today besides the daily arrivals of foodgrains for meeting current requirements, Calcutta had more than a month's reserve on its hands. The supply position had considerably improved during the last three months and between now and the end of December the Government intend to put in 120,000 tons at least. The Government of India have given large sums of money to Bengal in the forms of loans and advances totalling Rs. 12 crores, in addition to Rs. 63 lakhs for growing more food. Referring to malnutrition, the Food Member said that the public health authorities were making special inquiries into the steps that were necessary and possible to minimize the effects of famine. It was not possible for the Government to replace deficits in rice with equivalent surpluses of rice from other areas and some adjustment in diet by the utilization of foodgrains which might at first be strange to the people, was essential. The result might be a change of habit which would in the end prove beneficial to many classes and to the introduction of better balanced diets in many areas where the reform had long been needed. Sir Jwala said that all possible steps were being taken to assist the Bengal Government in the provision of medical relief. The military authorities had made available a hospital, a casualty-clearing station and two field ambulances. They had also made available the services of 100 Army doctors, including 10 experienced hygienists, for medical relief and epidemic work. The services of 29 doctors and 10 public health inspectors had been obtained from the Government of Burma. The military authorities had also supplied 1,000,000 vitamin capsules for the treatment of starvation cases and a consignment of 1,000,000 vitamin capsules had also been received by air from HMG. Exports of all foodgrains had been completely stopped since July last. There was no truth whatever in the report that a large consignment of foodgrains had been exported from Calcutta to S Africa. The total export of rice from Calcutta since January to date had been only 2,727 tons of which 2,000 tons were for the Persian Gulf and the balance for the requirements of the crews of the Indian ships in foreign ports. The Food Member reiterated that the problem was mainly one of shipping. The Government would assist the Provincial Government by going to the utmost extent possible to take the needs of Calcutta out of the Bengal market. As regards the aman crop, it followed that if the full effect of those additional supplies to Bengal was to be realized, confidence restored, prices lowered and normal movement resumed, the off-take from the rural markets should be reduced to a very moderate figure. Referring to the denial policy, the Food Member disclosed that 17,500 tons of rice and 20,000 tons of paddy were purchased. Of this 2,437 tons was released for Ceylon and the entire balance was consumed by Bengal. As regards boats, about 25,000 country-craft were removed on payment of compensation by the Government of India. There had been no attempt to remove boats altogether from any area. They were collected and kept under control at specified centres. Extensive use of country-craft for essential agricultural purposes or communications had been already allowed on temporary permits specially to move the aman crop of 1942-43 and the return of boats was now being freely permitted. In fact no boats were now held by the military authorities under the denial policy. Every effort was also being made to find alternative employment for fishermen affected by these orders. Alluding to Sir Frederick James' remarks relating to wastage in the Army, Sir Jwala said that necessary orders had been issued to ensure that no waste of foodstuffs was allowed, and any item of the scale now sanctioned which could not be consumed would be withdrawn to the extent necessary. The present scale of ration was considered no more than adequate by the military medical authorities. Officers commanding units were, however, fully aware of the food shortage and he was assured, would keep their eyes open for instances of waste. Dealing with allegations of profiteering by

the Central Government, the Food Member disclosed that in pursuance of the undertaking given by the Central Government, the accounts of the wheat transactions had been examined. Although all the final bills of the Agents had not been received yet and the final figures were not yet available, it appeared likely that the pool price of Rs. 11-10 would leave with the Central Government a substantial profit. The Government, therefore, had reduced the price of wheat to Rs. 11-15 a maund with retrospective effect and the Controller of Food Accounts had already been requested to pass on credits to the receiving administrations at 11 annas a maund on quantities received by them. When the accounts were completed, they would be reviewed as a whole and a further credit would be passed to the receiving administrations.

The House rejected the Muslim League's amendment by 41 votes to 26. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's amendment was negatived by 41 votes to 5. The amendments of Mr. K. O. Neogy and Kailash Behari Lal were rejected without a division. The Assembly then adjourned.

SCHEDULED CASTES AND ARMY

19th. NOVEMBER :—In the Assembly today, Government accepted a resolution asking that the Army should be thrown open to members of the scheduled castes and that military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes. Mr. Piaralal Kurell Talib, a scheduled caste representative from the U. P. moved the resolution and was supported by Mr. Hussainbhai Lalji, Dr. Govind Deshmukh, Mr. N. M. Joshi, Mr. Azhar Ali and Sardar Sant Singh.

Mr. Talib admitted that there might be no bar to the scheduled castes entering the Army, but because of a lack of definite policy on the part of the Central Government, Provincial Governments were following their own policies in their areas. He had received a letter from Madras stating that many young men from the scheduled castes had not been selected for commissions in the army because they had not the social status. This, he declared, was a cruel irony.

Mr. Sivaraj suggested that scheduled castes members should be appointed as Recruiting Officers. That was one of the ways in which scheduled castes could be encouraged to come in larger numbers.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi, War Secretary, accepting the resolution said that the position which the mover sought to obtain by the resolution already existed at present. Military services were open to every class in the country and there were few, if any, classes unrepresented in the Army. He gave the categorical assurance that there would be no discrimination against the depressed classes. He was surprised to hear that Provincial Governments rejected depressed class candidates for emergency commissions : for, Provincial Governments had nothing to do with selections of candidates for these commissions, and he was reluctant to believe that any candidate was rejected because he belonged to the depressed classes. If instances were given he would look into them.

Mr. Trivedi explained that there already existed a number of regiments of Mahars, Chamars and others from different provinces in addition to a little over 200,000 scheduled caste non-combatants from all provinces. He undertook to consider Mr. Sivaraj's suggestions, but he reminded the House that the whole system of interviews had been changed and under the new system selection depended on personality, qualifications, merit and not on parentage or status.

The resolution was passed.

Dr. Govind Deshmukh moved a resolution suggesting improvement of pay and condition of services of the Indian element in the Cantonment Department and Executive Officers' Service in the interest of efficiency and justice in the Indian element. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. Azhar Ali and Mr. Lalchand Navalrai supported the resolution.

Mr. Wakeley, replying for Government, expressed his inability to accept the resolution. He said that nobody knew what would be the size and lay-out of the Indian Army after the war and what would be the size and number of cantonments which would then be needed. It was, therefore, unwise to plan the Cantonment Services during the war. As for the scales of pay he explained that real pay did not compare unfavourably with those in civil employment. Government, however, were at present examining the position with a view to improving prospects and conditions of service of Cantonment personnel.

The resolution was withdrawn and the Assembly adjourned *sine die*.

The Bengal Legislative Assembly

July Session—Calcutta—5th. July to 14th. July 1943

MR. FAZLUL HUQ'S STATEMENT ON RESIGNATION

The Bengal Legislative Assembly met for a short session at Calcutta on the 5th. July 1943. There was a large attendance of members and the public galleries were crowded. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, who had held the office of Chief Minister of Bengal for the last six years, but resigned office in the last session, sat in the Opposition as its Leader. The other front bench Opposition members were Dr. Shyama Prosad Mukherjee, Leader of the Hindu Nationalist Party, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Leader of the unofficial Congress Party, and Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed, Leader of the Krishak Proja, all of them members of the last Ministry.

After question-time, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Chief Minister, and three of his colleagues in the last Cabinet, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, Mr. P. N. Banerjee and Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed asked leave of the House to make statements regarding the circumstances connected with their resignations. A long discussion followed on the point whether they should be allowed to make their statements.

On behalf of the Government *Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin*, Chief Minister, objected to such statements being allowed to be made, stating that the rules of business of the House allowed an individual who had resigned to make a statement in explanation of the resignation, but it did not cover the present case where an entire Cabinet had resigned.

Allowing the ex-Ministers to make their statements the Speaker, Mr. Syed Nausher Ali, said that he did not think that the rules of business of the House warranted any conclusion that when an entire Ministry had resigned members of the Ministry would have no right to make any personal statement.

Mr. Fazlul Huq's Statement on Resignation

In his statement on the events that led to his resignation, Mr. Fazlul Huq charged Sir John Herbert, Governor of Bengal with partisanship and violation of his Instrument of Instructions. At the outset, Mr. Huq said that the Secretary of State for India had stated in Parliament that Mr. Huq's resignation had occurred in the course of procedure under provincial representative institutions. The language used by the Secretary of State was mysterious, if not meaningless. He (Mr. Huq) sent a telegram to the Secretary of State definitely protesting against his incorrect version of events and requesting him to ascertain facts before he publicly committed himself to any account of what had taken place. He also sent a telegram to H. E. the Viceroy urging him to cable correct facts to the Secretary of State for India. To this he received a reply that the Governor had been in communication with the Secretary of State and with regard to variations between Mr. Huq's version and that of the Governor, the Secretary of State felt satisfied that the version of the Governor was correct.

Had India been a free country and this Assembly a real Parliament with sovereign powers, said Mr. Fazlul Huq, Sir John Herbert would long ago have been recalled to milder climes to spend his talents on less pretentious avocations than the Governorship of the premier Province of India. In all that he was saying, added Mr. Huq, he was referring only to Sir John's actions in his official capacity as executive head of the Province and his statement had no bearing whatever on any other aspect of his character or conduct.

After narrating the circumstances leading to the formation of his Cabinet in 1941, Mr. Fazlul Huq said that after they came into office "Sir John Herbert was not only unsympathetic but in many cases positively obstructive. We felt his interference and obstruction in matters of day-to-day administration so keenly that we apprehended that we were heading towards a crisis."

DIFFERENCES OVER REPRESSIVE POLICY

Mr. Huq quoted from his letter to the Governor on August 2, (published at the end of this report) explaining to him that the situation was becoming critical and asking him to proceed on constitutional lines.

"I received no reply to this letter of August 2, 1942," said Mr. Huq in the course of his statement, "and I was surprised that even in the course of private interviews, Sir John Herbert never referred to the matters I had discussed in the letter regarding my strong criticisms of his actions. It is significant that he never

attempted to reply to any of the very serious allegations I had made in that letter although possibly he was all the time harbouring resentment."

Mr. Fazlul Huq also said that he and his colleagues were asked to dissociate themselves from the statement made by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee on February 12 in the House regarding the circumstances leading to Dr. Mookerjee's resignation. They were asked practically to make a statement in the House that the Governor had been acting in a most constitutional manner and that the measures taken by the Government had not only been amply justified, but had been carried out under circumstances of exceptional clemency under great provocation. "Personally," said Mr. Huq in his letter, "I was not prepared categorically to deny all that Dr. Mookerjee had said. There was much in that statement with which I certainly agreed and I could not reconcile my conscience with the suggestion that had been made to me, to condemn statements with which I was more or less in agreement. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the European party became violently inflamed against me and I now suspect that from February onwards there was a sort of an agreement between my political adversaries on the one hand, high officials and the European party on the other, to oust me from office."

Mr. Huq continued : "A few days later came the Bombay Resolution of the All-India Congress Committee and the disturbances which broke out all over India on August 9. Bengal naturally had more than its share of the policy of repression carried on throughout India in the name of suppression of what was called the Congress rebellion in the country. The Defence of India Rules were freely used to arrest and imprison prominent leaders of the people and also to impose what was called collective fines in areas where the disturbances happened to be of an abnormal character. In the case of many of these arrests and orders of imprisonment I differed from the police point of view and also from the Governor's point of view. In a very few cases, my recommendations were accepted but I was overruled in every other case. In some cases the evidence appeared to me to be so slender that I expressed my surprise that the police should be insisting on orders being passed on practically no evidence. A few of these arrested persons have been released within the last week and I wish the materials on which they had been originally arrested and the reasons for which my orders of release were overruled by the Governor, could be made public. Possibly, the Governor has agreed to the release of prominent politicals in order to cover the present Ministry with short-lived glory, but the public can easily see through the game. In many cases, orders passed by me so long ago as August or September last have been allowed to remain unexecuted till some momentous considerations of State have induced the Governor to consent to their release at this moment just on the eve of the session of the Legislature.

"In the case of collective fines, we had tremendous difficulties. In most of the cases, the amounts imposed were hardly commensurate with the crimes that had been committed and in almost all of these cases, the innocent suffered more than the guilty. As usual, my dissentient voice never prevailed and the police point of view and the recommendations of the permanent officials found favour with the Governor."

INSIDE STORY OF THE "RESIGNATION"

Dealing with what he called "the circumstances under which Sir John Herbert managed to secure my signature on that fraudulent document called my letter of resignation," Mr. Fazlul Huq said that when His Excellency asked him for his resignation on the 28th March this year, after being summoned to Government House, he vehemently but respectfully protested. The Governor told Mr. Huq that he wanted his resignation as he (Mr. Huq) had made statements in the House that he would be prepared to tender resignation in order to facilitate the formation of an All-Parties Cabinet. "I said that I still adhered to that position but that was no reason why I should resign without being satisfied about the fulfilment of the conditions for an All-Parties Ministry. He, however, insisted on my tendering resignation then and there, and in order to clinch the matter, he brought out a typed piece of paper purporting to be my letter of resignation to the Governor. I explained to him that if I tendered my resignation at that stage, the Budget demands would remain unfinished and the Finance Bill also would be sabotaged. But the Governor was still insisting on my signature. I then asked for time to consult my colleagues and my Party. But the Governor was obdurate and refused my request. He was determined to have my signature then and there. I still resisted. Upon this the Governor slightly changed his front and assured me that

no effect would be given to the letter of resignation immediately, but that he would keep it with himself to be shown to party leaders in case there was the possibility of an All-Parties Cabinet. Upon this assurance given by the Governor, that the letter of resignation would not be made effective unless actually required for the purpose of the formation of an All-Parties Cabinet, I signed that letter and handed it over to the Governor. I again reminded him that it was not meant to be treated as a letter of resignation and that no effect should be given to it unless the circumstances arose for which I had consented to sign that previously drafted piece of paper.

GOVERNOR'S "PARTISAN ZEAL"

Of the formation of Sir Nazimuddin's Cabinet, Mr. Fazlul Huq said : "Sir John Herbert so far forgot himself that he stooped to canvass support for Sir Nazimuddin's Cabinet. He then proceeded to put Sir Nazimuddin in power with a Cabinet consisting of thirteen members, thirteen Parliamentary Secretaries and four Government whips, although in our time we were not allowed any expansion of our small Cabinet of only eight Ministers, or the appointment of more than one Parliamentary Secretary."

Mr. Fazlul Huq added : "When once he had made up his mind that I should be removed from the office of Chief Minister, Sir John Herbert did not hesitate to adopt any measures to achieve this end. He did not hesitate to cajole me, persuade me and to hold out promises which he never meant to keep. But, he forgot all his promises and cast his assurances to the wind the moment I had turned my back on Government House, and manifested all the zeal of a partisan in trying to secure colleagues for Sir Nazimuddin...Of all the faults of which a Governor can be guilty, the fault of partisanship is the most reprehensible. In England or the English Colonies such an attitude of a Governor would never be tolerated. A partisan Governor is no more fit for his high office than a partisan Judge. By being a partisan, he acts contrary to his Instrument of Instructions and makes himself liable to removal from office... A Governor who acts in contravention of the terms of his commission makes himself liable to censure, judicial punishment or recall. It is an outrage on the constitution if a Governor-General or Governor seeks to place himself above the law of the land by the exercise of his powers of discretion or individual judgment and the Legislature owes a duty to itself to help to discover and fight for constitutional remedies against such violation."

Concluding, Mr. Fazlul Huq said : "I have made certain definite allegations against His Excellency the Governor. I have charged him with partisanship and violation of his Instrument of Instructions. The charges are either true and correct, or false and incorrect. The public have a right to know whether His Excellency accepts my allegations as true and correct or otherwise. His Excellency is not without his remedy. Apart from issuing Government communiques or press Notes, His Excellency the Governor has the right to address the House and let the members know his version of the various incidents to which I have referred in my statement. The points raised are of the utmost constitutional importance and His Excellency would be extremely ill-advised if he allows the public to draw their own conclusions from his studied silence."

After Mr. Fazlul Huq had concluded his statement, three of his colleagues in the last Cabinet, Messrs. Santosh Kumar Basu, Pramatha Nath Banerjee and Shamsuddin Ahmed, made separate statements in explanation of their resignation.

The Chief Minister, Sir Nazimuddin, then placed before the House a statement on the food situation in Bengal by the Minister for Civil Supplies, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, who is at present away in Delhi in connection with the food conference. The House at this stage adjourned.

Mr. Huq's Letter to Governor

The following is the text of the letter dated August 2, 1942, addressed by Mr. Huq to the Governor referred to in the ex-Chief Minister's statement :—

"At a time when the implications of the Congress resolution have filled all our hearts with the deepest anxiety for the future of India, I feel unfortunately compelled to write this letter to Your Excellency. I wish I could avoid this correspondence. But circumstances have left me no other alternative, and it pains me much to have to say very bluntly that you have contributed not a little to the creation of the situation which has forced me to take this unpleasant step. You are the Governor of the Province and I am your Chief Minister and your principal adviser. Our mutual relations impose on both of us reciprocal duties and obligations, and I can never shirk the responsibility of intervening by means of friendly

but frank advice whenever I find you are treading the wrong path. If I allow things to drift, I will be failing in my duty to you and to the people of this Province. I am convinced that the time has come when I must speak to you quite openly what I feel in order to avoid a constitutional crisis in Bengal. More than once have I sounded a note of caution and have told you that you have been following a policy which cannot but have the inevitable effect of practically suspending the constitution in Bengal, reducing it in a position similar to that of the provinces governed under Section 99 of the Government of India Act. I have tried to convince you that, by listening to the advice of a few officials, you are acting as if your ministers did not exist and that you were free to deal direct with Secretaries and other permanent officials. As the head of the Cabinet, I cannot possibly allow this attitude on your part to go unchallenged. The present letter is no more than another and the last attempt to put matters right, and I sincerely hope that this letter will have the desired effect. I am writing with the stern resolve to assert myself as the Chief Minister, and I can assure you that if it leads to a constitutional struggle between you as the Governor and me as the Chief Minister, I will not shrink from doing my duty regardless of consequences.

INTERFERENCE IN ADMINISTRATION

"Broadly speaking, there are two classes of cases wherein, I regret to have to say, you have failed to act as a constitutional Governor. In the first category, I will put that class of cases wherein I have detected your personal interference in almost every matter of administrative detail, including even those where your interference is definitely excluded by the Government of India Act. A little reflection will convince you how unwelcome must be such an interference, and how bitterly Ministers must resent impediments in the way of the very limited powers which they possess under the Act. As it is, the Act is bad enough and is no better than a clever subterfuge by which the permanent officials have got all the powers but no responsibility, whereas the Ministers have all the responsibility and no powers. But the camouflage with which the Act abounds is so transparent that it is not difficult to detect that, beneath the pretentious device of Ministers functioning in a system of Provincial Autonomy, the real power is still vested in the permanent officials, the Ministers have been given a mockery of authority and the steel frame of the imperial services still remains intact, dominating the entire administration, and casting sombre shadows over the activities of Ministers. Any interference with even this limited power of Ministers is, therefore, the worst of its kind, and I regret that your record in this respect has in no way been a negligible one. In the second category, I would put those classes of cases in which you have, directly or indirectly, encouraged sections of permanent officials to flout the authority of Ministers, leading them to ignore Ministers altogether, and to deal directly with you as if the Ministers did not exist.

"Arising out of all this, there is also one important factor, not directly connected with the cases I have mentioned above, but which has also contributed towards the creation of the situation which I sincerely deplore. I refer to your attitude in Cabinet meetings, where you monopolise all the discussions and practically force decisions on your Ministers, decisions which are in many cases the outcome of advice tendered to you by permanent officials belonging to services whose traditions are fundamentally opposed to a genuine spirit of sympathy with the feelings and aspirations of the people.

"ACT AS A TRUE STATESMAN"

"I know these are very harsh words to use to a Governor, but I want to be perfectly frank with you. I have decided to carry frankness to the extreme limit, because it is my earnest desire to render you the utmost possible help in the difficult days that lie ahead of us. Whether you will accept my advice or not, it is a matter with which I have no concern. The choice must lie with you. It is a question of confidence and trust. British officials in India are now faced with a situation unparalleled in the history of any civilised country in modern times. Gigantic events are shaking empires to their very foundations. Here, in India, we are faced with a crisis which may lead to the most momentous events affecting the destinies not merely of the people of this country, but of millions of human beings all over the world. If ever statesmanship was indispensable in guiding the policy of rulers, the present situation in India has need of that statesmanship in the fullest measure. I am therefore, asking you to play the role of a true statesman and to realise that India to-day has attained a position in world politics wherein the wishes of its people in matters of administration cannot be ignored with any-

thing like impunity. Administrative measures must be suited to the genius and traditions of the people and not fashioned according to the whims and caprices of hardened bureaucrats to many of whom autocratic ideas are the very breath of their lives. It is to your own Ministers and not to this class of officers that you should turn for advice if you desire to avoid pitfalls which have always been responsible for administrative disasters.

FOOD POLICY

"Let me now come to facts. As regards your personal interference in total disregard of ministerial responsibilities, I will briefly refer to only a few. There is first of all the case of your mandate to the Joint Secretary, Commerce and Labour Department, in April last in the matter of the rice removal policy. Here you acted as if the Government of India Act in Bengal had been suspended, and you were at the head of an administration under Section 93 of the Act. In a matter of such vital importance, affecting the question of the food-stuffs of the people, you should have called an emergent meeting of the Cabinet and discussed with your Ministers the best means of carrying out the wishes of the military authorities and of the Central Government. But you did nothing of the kind. You did not even send for the Minister in charge of the department, although he was readily available, but you sent for the Joint Secretary instead. You gave him order to take up the work of removal at once, without caring to find out the exact position regarding the excess of rice and paddy in different areas and the best means of removal and the cheapest method of carrying out the scheme. The Joint Secretary says that when he was arranging to carry out your orders, you grew impatient and gave him definite directions to arrange for the removal of excess rice from three districts within 24 hours. Even then you did not consult your Ministers, because presumably you thought you could not trust them. The result has been a dismal failure so far as this particular policy is concerned. The Joint Secretary, in his haste and hurry to oblige you, advanced twenty lakhs of rupees to a nominee of a friend to begin the work, without any terms having been settled, or without any arrangements having been made for the safety of public money, solely for the purpose of showing that he had started carrying out your orders. When we came to know of all this at a late stage, we did what we could to retrieve the unfortunate position into which Government had been placed, but even then we could not avert the disaster. At the present moment we are faced with a rice famine in Bengal mainly in consequence of an uncalled for interference on your part, and of hasty action on the part of the Joint Secretary. As regards the huge sums of money advanced indiscreetly under your orders by the Joint Secretary in the first instance, our legal advisers are extremely dubious if we can ever expect to recover the whole amount. The loss to Government is bound to be a considerable one and the responsibility for this needless waste of public money must be shared by you and your Joint Secretary.

"Then I come to the boat removal policy. In this you have all along been acting under the advice and guidance of some permanent officials without taking your Ministers into confidence. You have even ignored one who happens to be not merely your Chief Minister but also the Minister in charge of the Home Department. You seem to have been consulting the military authorities in secret and discussing plans with the permanent officials, and when everything is almost settled and matters have gone beyond control, you sometimes talk to us with a view to impart information as to what had been done or was being done. The most outstanding instance of blunder which has been committed by the permanent officials apparently with your knowledge and concurrence, has been the case of the prevention of boats from going out into the Bay of Bengal for the purpose of cultivation of the lands in the various islands lying at the mouth of the delta. Some tardy recognition of the urgency of the situation was made when a limited number of boats was allowed to go out into the Bay, but it was then too late to mend matters. I will not go into details, nor is it necessary to do so. It is enough for me to emphasise that the whole scheme was planned in consultation with the military authorities and some permanent officials, without the knowledge not merely of the Cabinet but even of the Home Minister.

"I now come to the question of the formation of Home Guards. It is true that you have recently given a belated consent to our proposals regarding these organisations, but the mischief of officialisation of Home Guards had already been complete. Constitutionally, you should have accepted our advice, but you did not, with the result that the permanent officials have practically officialised the whole

concern. I do not know how far you will now be able to retrieve the mischief that has been done.

CABINET EXPANSION

"I will now say a few words about the manner in which you have all along resisted my efforts for the expansion of the Cabinet and the appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries. Whatever may be your powers under the Act, it is evident that as the Chief Minister, I should have the final say in the matter of the composition of the Cabinet and in parliamentary appointments and that except for the gravest of reasons, you should not reject my advice in such matters. In England, it would be unthinkable that the Prime Minister's wishes about the Cabinet should be ignored. But your attitude has been one of definite disregard of my wishes in these respects. You seem to have taken up this attitude, perhaps in the forlorn hope of getting Sir Nazimuddin and his group into the Cabinet. Eight months have now passed and your efforts to placate them have borne no fruit but your reluctance to accept my advice has not been slow to produce the most bitter results inasmuch as it has hampered the administration of the various departments of Government and also thrown a burden on our shoulders which it is physically impossible for us to bear."

ORDERS PASSED WITHOUT CONSULTING CABINET

"During the last few days I have discovered that orders have been passed by Secretaries either on their own responsibility or with your approval, explicit or implicit, by totally ignoring the Ministers. For instance, orders have been passed that the Government of India should be requested to send back to Bengal all officers lent to India by the Bengal Government, orders have been passed that the powers exercisable by the Provincial Government under Section 76 (B) of the Defence of India Act Rules be delegated to local officers. I was not consulted in these cases although they affect vital matters of policy. Every day some fact or other comes to light which reveals how orders had been passed in important matters without the cognisance of the Minister concerned. I strongly deprecate and resent this procedure. After all, I and my Cabinet are responsible for whatever action is taken by Government and announced in your name. It is wholly unconstitutional and even unfair to saddle us with responsibility for matters of which we have had no knowledge and with which we have had no concern. Posts are created for officers without our knowledge, and forced upon us for acceptance, under circumstances which leave us no alternative but to agree. I could multiply instances, but I purposely refrain from doing so as I feel that what I have said already is enough to justify my grievance.

I now come to the class of cases in which permanent officials have acted in defiance of Ministers by completely ignoring their authority. Let me begin with the case of the outrages alleged to have been committed on women at Sanao in the district of Noakhali. There was a Deputy Collector at Feni who happened to be the Additional Sub-Divisional Officer at the time, who had sent a telegram to the District Magistrate apprising him of what had occurred and asking for instructions how to proceed. This action on the part of the Deputy Collector was resented by some of the officials, presumably because they thought that the telegram might be a very important piece of evidence against the guilty persons. This officer who had only tried to do his duty, was transferred from Feni by a telegram, at the bidding of the local officials, by the Chief Secretary. And the Chief Secretary passed orders without consulting me who happened to be the Chief Minister and the Home Minister! I came to know of the transfer several days after it had taken place when I went to Feni to find out what the facts of the alleged outrage actually were. I have since seen the papers relating to this transfer. The telegram, of course, is not on the file, but there is a remark by a high official that the Deputy Collector had acted indiscreetly. We know what this means. The Deputy Collector was naturally frightened and sought safety by applying for leave. This leave was refused, and the officer was summarily transferred to Serajganj, because high officials wanted to bundle him out of the Chittagong division altogether.

MR. HUQ'S VISIT TO FENI

May I, in this connection, remind you that when you came to know of my programme to visit Feni, you advised me not to go because you thought that my visit would embarrass the local officials? I explained to you that I had no intention of embarrassing anybody, but I considered it my duty to pay a visit to an

area where the people seemed to be so much distressed. When I went there, I found that practically all the officials of the Chittagong division had gathered at Feni with a view to prevent my visit to the place of occurrence. The Commissioner of the division plainly told me that he had received a telephonic message from your Secretary asking him to persuade me to abandon my visit. I did not go to the village because I did not want to quarrel with the officials but met relations of most of the women said to have been outraged and the relations of their deceased husbands. I had also certain documents brought up to me which left no doubt in my mind as to what had happened. The reasons for the telegraphic transfer of the Deputy Collector, and for the anxiety shown by you and the local officials to prevent my visit to the locality are abundantly clear. Even the Chief Minister had to be kept out of the way, because he could not perhaps be trusted to fall into line with the official plans. Further comment is superfluous."

The letter referred to "events leading to the closing down of the Lady Brabourne College in Calcutta" and concluded, "I want you to consent to the formation of a Bengali army consisting of a hundred thousand young Bengalis, consisting of Hindu and Moslem youths on a 50-50 basis. There is an insistent demand for such a step being taken at once, and the people of Bengal will not be satisfied with any excuses. It is a national demand which must be immediately conceded."

"You should act as the constitutional Governor and not as the mouthpiece of permanent officials, or of any political party. In other words, you should allow Provincial Autonomy to function honestly rather than as a cloak for the exercise of autocratic powers as if the province was being governed under Section 93 of the Act."

MIDNAPORE AFFAIRS

With reference to his statement in the Assembly of Midnapore affairs, Mr. Fazlul Huq said: "The matter came up before the House in the course of a discussion on an adjournment motion and all sections of the House, except the European party, strongly urged the appointment of a committee of enquiry. The allegations made were of so serious a character and yet so specific, that it was felt that it would be in the interest of the officials themselves to put the accusers to proof of their accusations. I agreed. This amounted to a promise to hold an enquiry into the allegations and when the Governor heard what I had said he wrote to me the following letter:—

15th. February, 1943.

My dear Chief Minister,

I have received information which I have difficulty in crediting in view of your report on Midnapore at your last interview, that you have given to-day in the Legislature an undertaking for an enquiry into the conduct of officials in that district. You are well aware that this subject affects my special responsibilities and you are also well aware of my views on the undesirability of enquiries in this matter. If my information is correct, I shall expect an explanation from you at your interview tomorrow morning of your conduct in failing to consult me before announcing what purports to be the decision of the Government.—Yours sincerely, (Sd.) J. A. Herbert.

"I could not take the situation lying down and wrote to the Governor the following reply:

16th February, 1943.

Dear Sir John,

In reply to your letter of the 15th February, 1943, I write to say that I owe you no explanation whatever in respect of my 'conduct' in failing to consult you before announcing what according to you is the decision of the Government; but I certainly owe you a duty to administer a mild warning that indecorous language such as has been used in your letter under reply should, in future, be avoided in any correspondence between the Governor and his Chief Minister.

During my last interview I certainly did not convey any impression that the affairs of Midnapore did not call for an enquiry. That interview only lasted for 15 to 20 minutes, and reference to Midnapore in the course of the discussion did not take up more than five minutes. It was for the first time during the last five months that I had been to Midnapore and even that for only six hours. I could only visit two or three villages, which are alleged to have been scenes of some outrages on women. All that I told you was that there had been no regular enquiry and it was difficult to say whether there were no exaggerations or whether these allegations were true. It was obviously impossible for me to give you any-

thing like a report about Midnapore. As a matter of fact, I had been asking the Home Department officials to let me have the Government version about Midnapore. But they utterly failed to do so or at any rate, could not supply me with any report, except a scrappy note which was handed over to me during the course of the debate yesterday.

A perusal of my speech will convince you that what I said was that the Council of Ministers, as distinguished from Government, were agreed that it would be expedient to hold a committee of enquiry if only with a view to exculpating the public servants from the very grave charges such as had been levelled against them. You will thus see that the question whether or not the Council of Ministers should tender to you a particular advice does not come within the purview of your special responsibilities, even if it be conceded that the acceptance of such advice would involve the exercise of your special responsibilities.

It appears from your letter that you are not prepared to give your consent to the constitution of a committee of enquiry. If so, the only course left open to me is to make a statement in the House in which I shall endeavour to explain that my statement made yesterday should not be taken as a commitment on the part of the Government to a committee of enquiry, and that I propose to read out to the House your letter under reply so as to explain my position. I shall not, however, do so without giving you previous notice. My Ministers are responsible to the Legislature and the Legislature has a right to expect a sufficient explanation as to why a committee of enquiry cannot be constituted. The only explanation which I can offer is the letter I have received from you. (Sd.) A. K. Fazlul Haque.

BUDGET DEMANDS RULED OUT

6th & 7th. JULY :—Budget demands for the current financial year not disposed of during the last session were ruled out of order by the Speaker in the Assembly to-day. Out of a total of 34 budget demands, eighteen were moved by the last Ministry in March and voted. Owing to the resignation of the Ministry at that stage the remaining demands could not be proceeded with. Section 93 of the Government of India Act of 1935 then came into force in the province till April 24th, when a Ministry headed by Sir Nazimuddin came into office.

The new Ministry sought to move the remaining demands at the present session, expenditure already incurred under them between 1st and 24th April during the period of suspension of the Constitution being covered by Governor's authorisation.

On a point of order raised by ex-Minister, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, on behalf of the Opposition, the Speaker held the motions out of order on the 7th. Dr. Mookerjee had urged that in accordance with the provisions of the Government of India Act it was necessary that a revised financial statement should be placed before the Assembly in respect of all grants for the entire year. He had also urged that the present demands mentioned no specific sums as required under the Act and rules.

In the course of his ruling the Speaker said that the main question was the propriety or legality of dealing with the budget piecemeal in more than one session. There was no precedent for a case like this. "The presence of saving clauses in the Government of India Act relating to Bills and the absence of similar provisions relating to the budget in the Act or in the rules coupled with the provisions in proviso (b) to Section 84 (1) of the Government of India Act and the rules framed thereunder indicate, to my mind, that far from contemplating that the budget could be dealt with piecemeal in different sessions, the law contemplates that the whole thing should be done in one session within the time limit prescribed by the rules.

That is why there appears to be provision for what is called guillotining. I doubt very much if the budget can be considered piecemeal in more than one session. The provisions of sections 78 to section 84 of the Government of India Act, and Rules 12 to 15 of the Governor's Rules framed under the proviso to sub-section (1) of Section 84 of the Government of India Act seem to indicate this. But it is not necessary for me to give any definite opinion about it in view of my opinion relating to other grounds."

Continuing, the Speaker said that if piecemeal treatment of the budget was permissible under the law, about which he had grave doubts, the Government must either place a new budget for the demands which they now proposed to make for the period from April 1, 1943 to March 31, 1944, or they must totally ignore the authorisation of expenditure by the Governor under these heads during the period

from April 1, 1943 to April 24, 1943, and place the entire unfinished portion of the budget for the consideration and vote of the House. It was not for him now to advise the Government as to what they should do. But there appeared to be no escape from this position.

The Speaker added that there was a good deal of force in the contention of the Opposition that the motions as intended to be moved were too indefinite and vague for the consideration of the House. The Government had not given any indication whatsoever as to the amount of expenditure between April 1, 1943, and April 24, 1943. "They maintain that it is not possible. I am sure that it is not practicable to give the exact figures but I have grave doubts whether or not an approximate amount can be given. In fact, budget means estimates of probable receipts and expenditure. I think there were ways out of the difficulty, but when the Government maintain that it is impossible, it is not for me to give them advice. In this connection it may be mentioned that approximate figures were supplied by the Assam and Orissa Governments when they presented the budget in the middle of the year on the revocation of the Proclamation by the Governor.

The motions as they stand, without the slightest indication as to the amount of expenditure incurred during the period between April 1, 1943, and April 24, 1943, are, I am afraid, inadmissible and not in order. I think, therefore, that I have got no other alternative but to uphold the point of order raised and I rule that the motions for demands for grants are out of order."

RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

9th. JULY :—The question of release of detenus and political prisoners came up for discussion in the Assembly to-day on a non-official resolution. Mrs. *Nellie Sen Gupta* (Official Congress) moved the resolution which asked Government to take immediate steps to set at liberty all prisoners detained in prison or restrained under Rule 129 or Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules, or under Regulation III of 1818, for their political views or activities, and release all persons convicted for offences connected with the movement following the arrests of Congress leaders in August 1942. The resolution further asked Government to appoint a tribunal, consisting of at least two persons of the position of High Court Judges to review all cases of security prisoners and convicts after giving full opportunity to the persons concerned to meet the charges against them, if any, in case Government fail to release the persons immediately, and also to appoint a non-official committee composed of representatives of all parties in both the Houses of Legislature to advise Government on the amenities and treatment provided for in the jails and detention camps for different classes of political prisoners and detenus.

By an amendment, Mr. *A. R. Siddiqi*, a member of the Ministerialist Party, asked the Assembly to record the opinion that the efforts of the present Ministry to implement their pledge in regard to the policy of release of political prisoners and the amenities granted to them and their families, were commendable, and also further to express the opinion that considering the present political conditions in the province, Government should expedite the release of political prisoners by reviewing individual cases and grant suitable and generous amenities to those who might not be released at once and to their families.

After the House had discussed the resolution for nearly two hours, the Assembly adjourned till Monday without concluding the debate. Neither the Government spokesman nor the leader of the Opposition participated in it to-day.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

12th. JULY :—The debate on the food situation in the province commenced to-day on special motions moved on behalf of the Opposition. These motions sought to censure the Government in regard to the handling of the food situation and suggested the adoption of certain steps to meet the situation. These included, among others, that export of foodstuffs from the province should be completely stopped and negotiations with other provincial Governments should immediately be undertaken, for importing foodstuffs from those provinces and vigorous steps should be taken for intensifying the grow-more-food campaign. The official Congress Party suggested that the handling of the food situation should be completely entrusted to a central food council consisting of representatives of all major political parties and a few experts.

Rai *Harendra Nath Chaudhuri* (Bose Party) moved the first resolution stating that Government had failed to tackle successfully the food situation in the province, and suggested, as measures to meet the situation, to declare Bengal as a

famine area, to stop all export from Bengal, to negotiate with provincial Governments for importing foodstuffs from those provinces, to abandon Government purchase of foodstuffs through "favoured agents" from other provinces at the sacrifice of provincial funds, to revise the scheme of anti-hoarding drive as to properly define hoarding and protect the interest of growers and not to promote hoarding by big stockists and traders, and to conduct grow more food campaign more effectively.

Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal on behalf of the Congress Party moved :

"This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Bengal has so far failed to satisfactorily tackle the serious food situation in the province, and with a view to bring about early relief the following measures should be adopted without any further delay :—

(a) the handling of the food situation should forthwith be taken out of the arena of the party politics and should be completely entrusted to a Central Food Council representative of all major political parties and a few experts on production, transport, nutrition and distribution :

(b) the province of Bengal should be declared as a famine area so that the responsibility for feeding the entire population may devolve upon the Government :

(c) there should be a complete stoppage of all exports of foodstuffs from the province on any account whatever and there should be no scope left for public suspicion in respect to the same ;

(d) attempt should be made to procure, by negotiation with respective Governments, sufficient quantities of foodgrains from other provinces till the 'Aman' crop of Bengal is harvested ;

(e) efforts should be made to obtain imports of wheat and other available foodstuffs from countries abroad as much to meet the present deficits in the normal requirements of the population of Bengal as to provide for the additional demands on the resources of the province on account of the war situation ;

(f) more vigorous measures should be adopted to promote the "Grow More Food Campaign" through (i) supply of sufficient quantities of good seeds ; (ii) adequate facilities for irrigation ; (iii) increased cultivation of cultivable waste lands ; (iv) conservation of cow dung manures and encouragement for the use of composts and other manures including synthetic fertilisers ; (v) encouragement to fodder crops ; (vi) suitable advances to the cultivators for enabling them to undertake intensive cultivation ; (vii) State guarantees of minimum prices for foodgrains produced by the agriculturists of Bengal for a period of least three years, and

(g) steps should be taken to prevent waste in the consumption of food in any form.

Dr. Sanyal said he was moving the motion with a view to discuss the food situation as a student of economics, and not as a politician. His first complaint against Government was that they had not looked upon the problem as a national crisis but had dealt with it purely on political considerations. The fundamental point for consideration for the solution of the problem was that measures taken by Government should inspire confidence in the people. Dr. Sanyal said that Government had failed in that respect. Continuing, Dr. Sanyal remarked that Government had laid all the emphasis on the question of maintaining adequate supplies to those engaged in the promotion of war effort, without paying attention to the problem of supplies for the civilian population as a whole. This, he said, was a wrong approach to the question. There might have been necessity for maintaining supplies to men engaged in essential services, but it was clear that unless the civil population was also fed it was sheer madness to continue maintaining the supplies to war workers. Dr. Sanyal directed his next criticism to the fact that Government conceived measures for mitigating the situation on a piecemeal or partial treatment of the situation. Thus, while there was no check on the maximum price of foodgrains, Government embarked upon restoring free trade and allowed big merchants and agents of Government to purchase rice in the mofussil at high price. This, Dr. Sanyal remarked, had been an entirely wrong approach to the question and was bound to fail, as it had failed. The measures that Government had taken had been on the assumption that there were plenty of supplies, and it was only the profiteers who were responsible for aggravating the situation. Here again, Government started on an entirely wrong basis. He said that whatever might be the justification for declaring publicly that there was sufficiency, Government ought not to have based their propaganda on such false data. It was criminal on the part of Government to waste their time on measures which could never succeed.

Proceeding, Dr. Sanyal dealt on the question of import of foodgrains from

surplus provinces and said that Government made a grievous error in not coupling the fixation of a maximum price with the restoration of free trade. It was apparent that the neighbouring provinces could never agree to the suggestion for restoring free trade. Dr. Sanyal had a talk with one of the Chief Secretaries of a neighbouring province. The Chief Secretary told him that his Government might agree to allow reasonable supplies to Bengal at reasonable rates while keeping the supplies required for his own province. As a result the Government had failed in that respect also. Continuing, Dr. Sanyal said that there was no denying the fact that food statistics were required for the solution of the problem. But Government failed to make proper arrangements for the distribution before they embarked upon the anti-hoarding drive. The drive meant much more than taking statistics of the food situation. It shifted the responsibility from Government on the people. The latter were asked to secure self-sufficiency. A food drive based on such an assumption was bound to fail. Then again, there was no restriction put on large purchases by big merchants and industrialists from Calcutta from the rural areas and as a result, whatever stocks there might have been, had been driven in to Calcutta. The food Committees which were set up were formed by magistrates and subdivisional officers who made choice of the Committee members not according to their representative capacity but whether those people were at the beck and call of the authorities. Referring to the Government proposal for opening distributing shops in place of controlled shops, Dr. Sanyal expressed his doubt about the success of the project. He emphasised the need for increasing the number of controlled shops and to increase the number of the inspection staff. Lastly, Dr. Sanyal maintained that a food council having representatives from all parties and groups should be set up and entrusted with the work of solving the problem. The Committee should meet everyday and its recommendations should be adopted by Government. With regard to the stoppage of exportation from Bengal, Dr. Sanyal remarked that despite the repeated declaration from Government to the effect that export had been totally stopped, reports continued to trickle down that exports were going on.

Mr. *Giasuddin Ahmed* (Krishak Proja) moved a resolution complaining that food drive had caused positive mischief by excluding Howrah and Calcutta from its operations.

Mr. *D. N. Sen* moving another resolution said that the food situation in Bengal had entered into its crucial stage. Mr. Suhrawardy had waxed eloquence over the results of the anti-hoarding drive. But what was the acute amount of hoards seized as a result of the drive? Mr. Suhrawardy himself admitted this to be approximately 7 to 8 million maunds—an amount barely sufficient for the province as a whole for not more than a fortnight. Mr. Sen denied that his constituency, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, was consulted by Government before they entrusted the purchase of rice for Government from the Eastern Zone to Messrs. Ispahani & Co. Would the Hon'ble Minister explain to the House whether the resignation of Mr. Melnes had anything to do with the appointment of this firm as the sole Food Purchasing Agent?

Dr. *Govinda Chandra Bhowmick*, *Rai Bahadur J. C. Sen*, Mr. *Shamsuddin Ahmed*, *Khondkar*, Mr. *Charu Chandra Roy* and Mr. *Surendra Nath Biswas* also moved resolutions on the question. The House then adjourned.

18th JULY:—Mr. *Dhirendra Nath Dutt* (Congress) said that the statement issued by the Hon. Minister of Civil Supplies on the food situation of the province lacked commonsense. He was of the opinion that deterioration had been checked but just the opposite was the case and the situation was deteriorating from day to day. The speaker could not say what was happening elsewhere in Bengal but he could make a statement that in the Chittagong Division people—men, women and children, famished and sunk to their bones, were dying of starvation. It was a ghastly scene to witness human beings in their skeletons moving about for food goaded by hunger. While that was the actual picture, here was a spirit of complacency pervading the Ministry. The Minister was satisfied with the steps taken. The two steps taken (1) Anti-hoarding drive and the second was the building of a surplus stock. The Minister might be satisfied but the people of the province knew that it was a dismal failure, no proper census had been taken, no representative food committee had been appointed and while the drive was going on the Calcutta merchants through their agents were purchasing the stocks released by ignorant agriculturists through sheer misapprehension. Mr. Dutt also spoke of the absence of controlled shops in mofussil where the only control shops were those where the Government servant at the expense of the people were being provided with essential

commodities at controlled prices. A certain Bar Association in his area applied to be permitted to have their supplies from the controlled shops. The petition was rejected on the ground that lawyers and students were anti-Government. An I. C. S. District Magistrate stated, said Mr. Dutta, that a mule was cent percent more valuable than a non-combatant Indian.

Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahed Khan (Government Party) spoke about the distress in Backergunj where from not less than 70 to 80 lakhs of maunds of paddy had been taken away. For want of proper propaganda before, the ignorant and illiterate cultivators did not understand the implication of the anti-board drive and in their ignorance and being apprehensive that even their little stocks would be seized, sold away their stocks just before the drive began. The result was disastrous for them. The speaker visited certain parts of the district and saw with his own eyes the distressing scene. It was a fact that girls and women were being taken to Patuakhali side for being sold. Some in despair were divorcing their wives. Not a few were eating unedibles and meat of dead cows.

Mr. I. G. Kennedy (European Party) opposing the motions said that as regards remedies for a very serious situation there were many points in the special motions on which all parties could agree. Much criticism have been levelled against the recent anti-board drive. Some were pertinent—for they of the European Party believed that it was a mistake to exclude Howrah and Calcutta from its scope. A most useful purpose would have been served if the gap which existed was filled up. In respect of redistribution in the rural areas the main value of the drive had been fulfilled. Government must concentrate on the elimination of hoarding and profiteering and deal mercilessly with black marketers. It was the big hoarders, those who hoped to profit on a large scale, who must be brought to book.

Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Burdwan said that in spite of the anti-board drive and in spite of inter-provincial barrier having been dropped they had not enough to meet their requirements. The whole thing, he thought, was due to the lack of an adequate policy of control by the Government. Big employers were allowed to purchase any amount of foodstuffs and although he did not grudge them being allowed to purchase and stock food grains for their employees there should have been some limit put upon the amount they could buy and stock. Could they call these employers and even the Government hoarders? As the result of the drive whatever little stock the agriculturists had, had been taken over. In the rural area now the pinch would be felt out of this drive. He did not propose to draw hasty conclusions or to cast reflections as to the reasons why this was done.

Mr. Dharendra Nath Mukherjee (Congress) said that in spite of showing quickness and dash the Ministry did not take all parties into their confidence in tackling the situation and had failed. Food Committees in rural areas had been filled up with men of independent views religiously excluded. Because one refused to pay bribe his stock was entered as 400 maunds although it was actually 40 maunds.

Mr. Abul Hashem (Muslim League) said that Bengal was really passing through a first-class crisis. He felt that no man, however intelligent and powerful he might be, could solve the problem unless he had the backing of the entire people and the Providence helped him. Instead of criticising Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy the members of the Opposition should have come forward to help him in solving the situation. After all, Mr. Suhrawardy was a human being and was open to err. But it should not be their policy to condemn him for one mistake or the other, or to find fault with him at every step. It was necessary that all parties should combine and fight this crisis. If they survived the crisis, they would get time to fight each other on political grounds.

Mrs. J. M. Sen Gupta drew the attention of the House to the "very serious" situation in her own constituency. She knew that military had to be fed and the mules of the Army had also to be fed, But Government could not go on feeding the military at the expense of the civil population for all times. People who were starving were being asked to grow more food to feed the mules. Government servants could get 2½ seers of rice for a rupee. People whose earning was below Rs. 25 could also get rice at controlled price. But they could imagine the conditions of those whose earning was only Rs. 30 per month. The arrangements made for distribution were extremely unfair. People were living on mango leaves and red potatoes. Malaria and cholera were breaking out in epidemic form. She urged that the Government must standardise the system of distribution.

Mr. Atul Sen (Bose Group) said that when the last Ministry went out of office there were reports that people were starving. The balance-sheet of the

achievements of the present Ministry showed that from reports of starvation there were now reports of deaths on account of hunger.

Mr. *Pramatha Nath Banerjee*, ex-Minister, after describing how the price of rice had gone up since the present Ministry had assumed office, criticised the statement made by Mr. *Suhrawardy* from time to time on the food situation. The abolition of zonal barriers was not the policy of the present Ministry. They were claiming credit for the policy of the Government of India. The policy of allowing big industrial concerns of Calcutta as also Government agents to purchase rice unfettered from within the province or outside at any price was not a policy of free trade. The ordinary civilian producers and consumers were thereby placed in a position of great disadvantage. "Famine and pestilence", he said, "cannot be solved by big promises and excuses". The establishment of a National Government in India was the only solution. The lawn of Government House might be briskly with vegetables, but the vegetables would not surely be available to the people of Bengal. The cost of living had increased by only 17 p. c. in England as against 286 p. c. in this country. Who would not tell that India was not enjoying peace?

Mr. *Puspajit Burman* (Scheduled Caste, Ministerialist) said that the food situation had reached a stage when people in the rural areas were selling away their last belongings to get food. They had lost their homes, lost everything which distinguished a human being from a beast. Numbers of street beggars in half-naked condition fighting with street dogs for remnants of food in the dustbins were now a familiar sight.

14th, JULY :—Mr. *Anandi Lal Poddar* said that Mr. *Suhrawardy* might very well prove to his colleagues in the League that Pakistan was working in Bengal but it would not satisfy the hunger of crores of his co-religionists in the countryside.

Mr. *Shamsuddin Ahmed*, ex-Minister and leader of the Krishak-Praja Party did not deny the necessity for having a food census which was decided upon by the last Ministry and could not be carried out because of the obstructionist policy of the Governor and some officials. But the way it had been executed had only caused havoc to the cultivators. He was of the opinion that the food situation could be handled by an all-parties Government.

Mr. *Bankim Chandra Mukherjee* (Congress), speaking as a Communist member of the Congress block, said that it was not possible for a dependent country like India to arrange import of foodgrains from outside. They would have to depend on their own produce. There was shortage and therefore rationing on a country-wide scale must have to be introduced. This could be done by a united Government in which both the Congress and League must join.

Mr. *David Hendry* said that the food situation had been deteriorating and the fact that at present it was not worse than what it was, almost gave him hope that they might soon be able to see round the corner. He never subscribed to the belief that the grain shortage was so acute as to reproduce the circumstances of previous famines, but scarcity there was and the present fantastic prices for rice had produced a price famine which was having the most disastrous effect upon certain classes of the people.

Dr. *Syama Prasad Mookerjee* stated that the food situation in Bengal had reached a critical stage and the present ministry must bear a very large share of responsibility for this state of affairs. The issue before the House to-day was not a condemnation of the past Ministry. The past Ministry had its good and weak points. It, however, had the courage to say that the policy of interference of a section of permanent officials beginning from the all-highest as also the policy of denial and State purchase of rice forced on Bengal by the Central Government, had greatly aggravated the situation. The Ministry since its assumption of office deliberately played a colossal hoax on millions of suffering people by insisting that there was no real shortage of rice in the province and that the main cause of deficiency was hoarding by private consumer, agriculturist and traders. The previous Ministry in spite of its shortcomings had declared that Bengal was a deficit area in rice. Government of India also was then made to accept this position. Without data or enquiry the new Ministry raised a false cry that there was no shortage. This was what really reactionary bureaucrats desired and strangely enough this also became his master's voice in the House of Commons shortly after the assumption of office by the new Ministry. Strangely enough the real big hoarders, stockists and profiteers were left untouched. Indeed they were allowed to thrive on the patronage of the Ministry itself. No one can object to the taking of proper statistics. This should have been done long ago and indeed the past Ministry was

prevented from doing it by reason of the interfering attitude of the Governor himself. The taking of census is one thing and a drive against private consumers with no intention to make profit was a different thing altogether. Ten precious weeks have been lost on account of the false issue raised by the present Ministry. To-day the Minister dares not disclose the result of the statistics, so far as deficit is concerned. The Minister has already announced that there is deficit in some districts. Bengal is anxious to know the actual detail. The result of the drive has been that on account of panic and possible seizure of small stocks followed by forcible loan without security, many people hurriedly disposed of what they possessed. Another unpardonable activity of the Ministry was the manner in which rice was sought to be brought from the neighbouring provinces under the new free trade scheme. There was no attempt to settle affairs by negotiations. The favoured and fortunate traders and private profiteers went to these provinces and started purchasing rice at prices far higher than the prevailing rates. This resulted in a complete upsetting of those provincial markets and brought their administration into conflict with the Bengal representatives. Here in Bengal the present Ministry is establishing a new convention by granting monopoly of business financed by unauthorised grants from public funds for which even security has been refused in order to favour political allies when death stares the faces of millions of Bengal's famished children. This conduct of the Ministry alone condemned it in the eyes of all-right thinking Indians throughout the provinces. Does the Ministry dare face an impartial enquiry? The present Ministry had bungled the situation and had allowed party and political considerations to dominate the affairs of administration. The Ministry had issued sweet and soothing statements from time to time, had even shown an inordinate consideration for the suffering consumers during the hot weather, thus reducing the quantity sold at the controlled shops but had always failed to increase the supplies! Dr. Mookerjee anticipated some further white-washing statements from the Minister strengthened by the valueless assurance from the Government of India. The Government of India had promised 5 lac tons of rice and other foodstuffs to meet the emergent situation in Bengal after the new Ministry assumed office before the Eastern Free Zone was declared. Dr. Mookerjee asked how much of that promise had been fulfilled. His information was that nothing had come out of this promised stock. The time would not permit him to indicate the details. Bengal must be declared a famine area and Government undertake responsibility for feeding the poor and the destitute. It was clear that there was a shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal. Let us get as much as we can from outside and specially insist on wheat being brought from Australia. But within the province there must be a full control over price, supply and distribution. And this can only be made effective by a Government enjoying the confidence of the people as a whole and representing the major parties and interest. Government must not only feed the troops and those engaged in war efforts directly or indirectly but as part of the war machine must keep the people at large satisfied with minimum food. People were ready to undergo every form of sacrifice and suffering provided this was equitably and fairly done. The province was faced with a real national crisis and no party Government can ever hope to make the right appeal to the people or exercise proper control over supply and prices. Mr. Fazlul Huq stated publicly over the food debate in March that with all the limitations of the present constitution he was willing to help in the formation of a Ministry representing all parties who were prepared to work the constitution. His resignation was obtained on this plea and thereby through the short-sighted acts of the Governor a party Ministry has been forced on the province. It does not represent the Hindus; the six orphans of the Moslem League storm have only kept alive the tradition of Umichand in the province of their birth. The province to-day is faced with famine condition. From everywhere are coming agonising reports of deaths, starvation, of suicide for want of food, of sale of cattle and property and even of children and desertion of family. Historians assert that cycle of disaster had visited Bengal with the change of Imperial dynasty. Gour, an abode of beautiful and luxurious palaces disappeared in one year by nature's hand and the desolate city was then left as the hovering ground of tigers and monkeys. This was just when Bengal had become part of the Mogul Empire. Some centuries later with the advent of British rule came the terrible famine of 1770. Who knows what the third cycle of 1943 is going to bring in its trend. If the war is to be won, concluded Dr. Mookherjee, and Japan is to be kept out of Bengal, it is essential that the people of this province must be fed and kept alive. The war was brought on us not out of our own seeking. Burma fell not on account of Bengal's fault. A famished and

starving Bengal is a source of danger to the cause of the Allied power themselves. Dr. Mookerjee appealed for unity and co-operation at this critical juncture. Let party spirit disappear for the time being. Let there be complete agreement amongst all sections of Indians and if possible Britishers so as to create an atmosphere of service and security which alone can help to ease the present tense situation. The failure of the present Government was obvious but the object of the motion was not merely to condemn but to reconstruct with the co-operation of all parties and groups who should be prepared fearlessly to put people's point of view before the real master of India and demand the fulfilment of their elementary rights if peace was at all to reign in this unfortunate province.

Sj. Kiran Sankar Roy, leader of the Congress Party, said that the Cabinet which wanted to solve the food problem must first inspire the confidence of the people. The present Ministry which had been brought into existence by "questionable" tactics which depended upon the pleasure of the European group for its existence was not one which was likely to inspire confidence of the people.

Replying to an interruption from Government benches, Sj. Roy challenged the party in power to demonstrate that they could carry a majority without the votes of the European party. Proceeding Sj. Roy said that the present Ministry had been in power for over two and a half months. He hoped it would not be pleaded on their behalf as a reason for their failure that they had got very little time to deal with the situation; because when the province was faced with a famine the solution could not wait for an indefinite period. Dr. Mookerjee had placed before the house a picture of what happened during the famine in 1770. They had just to remember what was happening in the country; the price of rice was mounting up, people sold their utensils, cattle and even were now prepared to sell away their children. They had starved and were now dying. That was the picture which had to be remembered in deciding the issue before the House. He criticised the statements of Mr. Suhrawardy from time to time in which he held out promises, and remarked that if Mr. Suhrawardy could not solve the problem he must stop humbugging.

Hon. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, after referring to the criticism of the Opposition that Government shifted the responsibility on the people, said that Government had never shirked its responsibility, and Government was prepared to bear the burden. He claimed that the anti-hoarding scheme was adopted at a meeting convened by the Muslim League, when it was in Opposition, of all parties in the House and some of the commercial bodies approved of the scheme. He was satisfied with the result of the drive. The latest figure of seizure by Government of rice was approximately 95 lakh maunds. This stock, he said, was neither a surplus stock nor was it going to meet the requirements. It was a stock which was kept back from the market. He further said that the quantities of rice recovered from a particular area would be kept there by the District Magistrate or the sub-Divisional officer.

Dr. N. Sanyal: What is the total deficit?

Mr. Suhrawardy did not give any reply to this question.

Mr. Suhrawardy at this stage claimed that the price of rice has fallen, and it was now available at Rs. 25 per maund. (Voice—Where?)

Mr. Suhrawardy: In Calcutta, to-day.

Dr. Nalinakshaya Sanyal: Would you get me 20,000 maunds at that price?

Mr. Suhrawardy: This is the figure which I have got from the wholesale market in Calcutta.

Mr. Suhrawardy then referred to the allegations made by the Opposition in respect of the appointment of Messrs. Ispahani & Co., as the sole Government purchasing agent, and denied the charge that any money was advanced to this firm. In fact, he said, Government had all along been indebted to the company.

Dr. Mookerjee: Are you prepared to hold an open inquiry?

Mr. Suhrawardy: There is no need for the inquiry. Dr. Mookerjee can easily see the books of accounts and audit it himself.

Mr. Fazlul Huq wanted to have certain information from Mr. Suhrawardy on the point. Mr. Huq said that he had seen papers in which it was definitely stated that about one crore and 80 lakhs of rupees had been advanced to Messrs. Ispahani & Co. without any legal document. Was it a fact or not?

Mr. Suhrawardy: No, definitely not.

The Hon. Minister then referred to the criticism of excluding Howrah and Calcutta from the food drive, and said that it was excluded on administrative reasons. There were too many houses and people did not know each other. How-

ever, orders had already been passed encircling Calcutta and Howrah so that not a single grain of food would be allowed to go out of these two cities. It would not be long before Calcutta and Howrah would be combed. Mr. Suhrawardy denied the charge that he had stated that there was no shortage of rice in Bengal. He admitted that there was shortage.

Dr. Mookerjee: Here are the quotations from your speeches. You had definitely stated that there was no shortage.

Continuing, the Minister said that he was going to organize on a famine basis. Then he would adopt test relief work, and then agricultural loan, partly in cash for seeds and cattle and lastly sale of food grains at subsidised price to the poorer section of the people would be organized. As regards the suggestion that Bengal should be declared a famine area, Mr. Suhrawardy did not give any reply. He stated that he had represented to the Government of India the conditions prevailing in Bengal, and the Government of India had fully realised that supplies should be given to Bengal.

Dr. Mookerjee: If these things do not happen, if supplies do not come from the expected sources, what happens then?

Mr. Suhrawardy: We shall be in great jeopardy.

Continuing Mr. Suhrawardy said: "I am sure, that the members must be anxious to know what are the possibilities of getting food grains from outside, and how I propose to deal with the situation which has arisen after the new policy of the Government of India. It will be realised that the Government of India found itself unable even to send rice according to the emergency plan, and although it has sent us wheat and wheat products continuously from the Punjab, it always fell short of the programme on the basis of which I had organised the distribution of food within Bengal. The Government of India announced that it intended to introduce free trade in India. Violent were the protests and a Conference was held at Delhi. I do not object to the putting up of provincial barriers provided supplies to Bengal are secured, and I am indeed fortunate that I am able to announce to this House that at that Conference we have been able to achieve something which, I trust, will assist us to tide over our present difficulties. Free trade will continue to operate until that time, and more than that the Provinces have agreed that they will honour the contracts which have been or will be entered into until the provincial barriers are put up again. In the meantime, the Government of India will continue to send us supplies. They do not absolve themselves of their responsibilities as they did when they introduced free trade within the Eastern Zone. They are taking every step to rush supplies to Bengal and have realised that immediate supplies are necessary.

Already a military ship has been placed at our disposal for transport of food grains to Chittagang and I am expecting similar assistance for other transits by sea. The military authorities have also agreed to place some road transport at our disposal to send food grains to Bengal and to utilise their own military movements for the purpose. As a gesture they have agreed to cut out the ration of rice which was allotted to the European soldiers. The Government of India, as I have stated, are arranging to send provisions by sea as well in order to relieve the congestion on Railways and they have also agreed that we may buy as much wheat products as we can from the Punjab without any restriction. From this point of view, therefore, Bengal can face the future with a little more hope and a little less despair than that which has enveloped it. More than this, I believe that we have secured the sympathy of our neighbouring Governments, the Governments of Orissa, Bihar and Assam and of the Resident of the Eastern States. I am most anxious to come to separate terms with them, and as soon as I am relieved from the present business of the Legislature, I propose to take this matter up with them separately or jointly. I do not think it will be very difficult. There is no justification for this madness in prices and even if the stock position justified the high prices prevailing in Bengal which I dispute, the helpless position of the poorer section of our countrymen cannot warrant it. I propose, and the other Governments agree with me, that a controlled price should be placed within the region. It will not be the same price throughout the Province but will be in parity, and this controlled price will progressively decrease. Over and over again members of the Opposition have taken up the parrot-ery that nothing can be done without a National Government. I do not know what they mean by it. Our hand of co-operation is always extended, not extended in the manner in which the late Ministry extended its hand in the Legislature and crushed the Muslim League outside, but in a true and friendly spirit. It the other Parties respond, we are prepared to receive them with open arms or stand the test of public obloquy."

The debate on the food situation at this stage concluded. All the resolutions moved by the Opposition were turned down. The Opposition divided the House on two resolutions. The first resolution on which the House divided was that moved by *Rai Havendra Nath Chaudhuri*, and it was defeated by 88 votes for and 134 against. The second division took place on Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal's* resolution, and the result was 82 for and 133 against. The three day-debate on the food situation concluded and the Assembly was *prorogued*.

Autumn Session—Calcutta—14th. to 28th. September 1943

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

"Bengal once so richly endowed with nature's bounties is today bent double with woe and agony and is a suppliant for neighbourly charity. In the situation in which we find ourselves there is no choice left to the Government but to undertake, in a very large measure, the task of relieving distress, regardless of cost," observed Mr. *T. C. Goswami*, Finance Minister, Government of Bengal in a statement, presenting the budget for 1943-44 in the Bengal Assembly held in Calcutta on the 14th. September 1943.

The estimates for the current year provide for a revenue of Rs. 18,55,00,000 (as against the actual receipts of Rs. 16,50,00,000 in 1942-43) and expenditure on revenue account Rs. 25,80,00,000 (as against the actual expenditure of Rs. 15,73,00,000 in 1942-43), leaving a deficit of Rs. 7,36,00,000 on the revenue account.

This is the third time that the budget estimates for the current year have been before the Assembly once during the normal February budget session towards the end of which the *Fazlul Huq* Ministry resigned and the second time during the last July session when certain budget demands remaining undisposed of in the February session were placed by Mr. Goswami after the *Nazim-ud-Din* Ministry was formed, but were ruled out as out of order by the Speaker. Consequent upon that a fresh budget for the entire year is now presented by Mr. Goswami.

The budget provided for Rs. half a crore for subsidised food accounts, Rs. 3,52,00,000 for famine relief, an increased expenditure of Rs. 66 lakhs under agriculture due mainly to intensification of "Grow More Food Campaign."

Mr. Goswami stated that the cost of rationing which was going shortly to be introduced had not yet been fully worked out, but was expected to be considerable for which a supplementary demand would be made in due course.

The Finance Minister announced that to reduce the startling gap between the expenditure and revenue he would introduce tomorrow an Agricultural Income-tax Bill as also a bill, later in the year, enhancing sales tax.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON FOOD SITUATION

15th. SEPTEMBER :—No new measures for improving the food situation in Bengal were announced by the Hon. Mr. *H. S. Suhrawardy* in the statement he made to-day. Mr. Suhrawardy read out a written statement, and took about 45 minutes to read it.

Before Mr. Suhrawardy commenced reading his written statement, Dr. *Syama Prasad Mookerjee* referred to a number of telegrams he had received from various parts of Bengal in which it was stated that no rice was available in the market, and enquired of the Minister to let the House know as to what he proposed to do to meet "this grave situation."

Replying Mr. Suhrawardy said that in all 5,71,000 maunds of rice, bajra and dal, (including 27,000 maunds of rice to Midnapore), "have been ordered to be despatched from Calcutta" to different districts of the East and the North Bengal. "These," he added, "are in addition to allotments of wheat products which are now being sent to the Muffasil areas directly from the Punjab and which are fairly substantial and also in addition to food grains being sent for relief measures to the cyclone affected areas of Midnapore and 24-Parganas and the flooded areas of Burdwan and Midnapore."

The House gave patient hearing to what Mr. Suhrawardy had to say on the subject although it was in substance merely a repetition of what he had stated previously, except a frank confession, perhaps for the first time, that "there are areas which are in grave distress," "that without substantial imports of foodgrains from outside we are not in a position to meet the situation," and finally, "is it to be wondered at that there should be a serious shortage of foodgrains in the province?" Mr. Suhrawardy began his statement by attacking his opponents stating that if there was no rice available in the market, the members of the Opposition were responsible for it. Rice has disappeared largely due to the propaganda of

some of the members of the Opposition to the effect that control is not possible without supply.

Dr. *Syama Prasad Mookerjee* : That is perfectly true.

Mr. *Suhrawardy* : That may be true, but you must realise that supplies are there. Rice cannot possibly disappear from the market in course of a day. It has disappeared owing to the mischievous propaganda by certain members of the Opposition.

There were interruptions from the Opposition, and the *Speaker* requested the House to give the Hon. Minister a patient hearing as he was speaking on a subject which was "a momentous one," even if they might not agree with his views.

Proceeding Mr. *Suhrawardy* said that foodgrains had been despatched to the deficit areas which had helped greatly in relieving the situation. "Further despatches are constantly being made but the extent is limited, partly by supplies and partly by the inadequacy of transport facilities within the province. "Uptill now," confessed Mr. *Suhrawardy*, "we have not been able to speed up these transport facilities and our programme for moving foodgrains is always behindhand because we are unable to get the necessary wagons." Claiming that Government were feeding in rural Bengal about eleven lakhs of people daily from 2,200 kitchens "run almost wholly at Government expense, but with which non-official endeavour are being increasingly associated", Mr. *Suhrawardy* spoke of the recent drive in Calcutta and the results obtained therefrom. "The stocks", stated Mr. *Suhrawardy*, "are neither considerable in the hands of consumers nor of the trader nor the employers." Mr. *Suhrawardy* announced that the Government of India had placed in their hands a sum of one crore and 50 lakhs of rupees to enable Bengal to meet the requirements of the various gratuitous relief through gruel or Khichuri kitchens or through doles in kind, test relief works, agricultural loans and cheap grain shops. Replying to Dr. *Mookerjee*, Mr. *Suhrawardy* stated that he hoped that equal amounts would be coming to them in two other instalments. "The amount at our disposal," said he, "is not sufficient and we have had to supplement them by raising money through treasury bills." Mr. *Suhrawardy* repeated what he had been stating about the Aus crop, adding that the six surplus districts had been condoned.

(Voice. This is all bogus).

Although Mr. *Suhrawardy*, in his reply to Dr. *Mookerjee* at the beginning of his statement, declared that rice was disappearing because of "the mischievous propaganda by certain members of the Opposition," said in his written statement that he was gratified "to note that the price control has been maintained and that rice is re-appearing in our markets, after a period of hesitation, at controlled rates."

Dr. *Sanyal* : Please do not indulge any more in fanciful speculations.

Mr. *Suhrawardy* : I maintain rice is re-appearing. We are not however out of the woods yet. It will take some time before the trade adjusts itself to the falling prices, and we are taking all steps to see that supplies are maintained. Proceeding Mr. *Suhrawardy* repeated his threats to the trade and advised them to put their stocks on the market "at once and play the game by the people of Bengal."

Continuing Mr. *Suhrawardy* said that "distress, even famine conditions still exist in an acute form in many areas."

Dr. *Mookerjee* : How one wishes you stated all these when you assumed office ! You stated there was no shortage.

Mr. *Suhrawardy* : I have never said that; Dr. *Mookerjee*.

The price of rice still remains far too high for the average population and undoubtedly this had led to grave distress throughout the province even where foodgrains are available. Although at one point, Mr. *Suhrawardy* stated, that the Aus crop had alleviated the distress "to some extent," at another place, Mr. *Suhrawardy* stated : "Aus is a consumers' crop. It has come after a period of great distress. It has come when the psychology of the people is attuned to caution and where the distress of others has only served to increase the instinct of self-preservation." Therefore "there can be no doubt that without substantial imports of foodgrains from outside we are not in a position to meet the situation," the Food Minister added. Mr. *Suhrawardy* then spoke on the Impressions he had brought back with him from outside Bengal. It was to the effect that he was "amazed at the ignorance prevailing in generally well-informed circles regarding the position of Bengal and the reason why there was a shortage." "There are still people in India", said Mr. *Suhrawardy*, "who suggest that there is enough foodgrains in Bengal and that by false propaganda we are declaring a shortage which does not exist and over-dramatising the situation."

Mr. Suhrawardy then gave 11 reasons for the present food situation in Bengal, such as, "failure of Aus crop in 1942," "failure of Aman in 1942-43," "havoc caused in Midnapore and 24-Parganas," "destruction of paddy by pest," "the boat denial policy," "evacuation of the coastal areas," "refugees from Burma," "influx of industrial labour," "loss of import from Burma," "construction work of various types," "influx of consuming population in the shape of the military" and lastly "great shortage of normal imports from other provinces." After referring to what Mr J. P. Sivastava had been doing and what the Punjab sending, Mr. Suhrawardy repeated that the military department were allotting ships for foodgrains from Sind to Bengal. After praying to God to help him to tide over the difficulties, Mr. Suhrawardy stated "it is only now that after long last we are able to see some light and some hope surges in our breast and that we may, by the aid of of the Almighty, be able to alleviate the present situation." Mr. Suhrawardy welcomed the presence of Mr. Kirby, the rationing expert, in Calcutta "to guide them in the operation."

Dr. Mookherjee: Operation may be successful, but the patient will die.

Mr. Suhrawardy then referred to the reflux of the destitute to Calcutta and while "in reverence" mourned the death of some of them, he believed that they had not died in vain, "as they have focussed the attention of India to the terrible conditions prevailing in this province, have roused the Government of India to action which is already bearing fruit and has aroused the sympathy of the Indian peoples to the need for succour." Fortunately Mr. Suhrawardy did not refer to this uprooted humanity as belonging to the begging population as he said on a previous occasion but one "wandering away from their homes, away from the environments which supported them, in a state of economic submersion, with no vitality to bear the inclemencies of the sun and rain in a strange land, some unhappily are bound to succumb and death must take its toll."

After referring to how the situation developed itself, Mr. Suhrawardy again returned to his charges against his political opponents by saying that he found the Delhi and Lahore atmosphere surcharged with falsehood sedulously propagated by Mahasabhaites against the Bengal Ministry. He defended the firm of Ispahanis after pointing out that he was not a partner of the firm, and if the same charges were made in future they would be made deliberately and knowing that those charges were false. The accounts of the company were being inspected, checked and examined by three officers of the Accountant General's office.

Dr. Mookherjee: Why not have an open enquiry.

Mr. Suhrawardy: There is nothing to enquire about.

Proceeding Mr. Suhrawardy stated that he invited Dr. Mookherjee to personally inspect the books of accounts of Ispahanis and once when he came to him he advised Dr. Mookherjee to go to the office of Ispahanis and look into the papers which Dr. Mookherjee declined.

Dr. Mookherjee: Why should I go there ?

Mr. Suhrawardy proceeding said that he also asked Dr. Mookherjee to give him facts and figures and promised him to get them verified by his officers but that proposal too was not accepted by Dr. Mookherjee. He only wanted to repeat what he had stated formerly that if Dr. Mookherjee wanted to look into the papers of Ispahanis he could do that by going to the office of the firm.

Dr. Mookherjee: Why should I go there ?

Concluding Mr. Suhrawardy paid his tribute to the premier of Orissa for their generosity.

"While they themselves were in difficulties." He also thanked what the premier and the food minister of the Punjab had done for Bengal. "The Government of India, as I have already stated above," said he, "are taking every possible step to assure us more foodgrains and to transport what is already available and I have it on the best authority to state that imports from foreign lands are also on the way. I have done whatever I could do during the very short time that we have been functioning. We have had a terrible legacy to cope with and if I have been of any service to the people of Bengal and if my efforts have helped at all to alleviate the distress, I can, with some confidence, claim that I have done my duty."

DETENTION OF SECURITY PRISONERS

16th. SEPTEMBER :—By 62 to 111 votes the adjournment motion tabled by the Congress Party regarding the detention of security prisoners under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules which had been declared illegal by the High Court of Calcutta and the Federal Court, was turned down in the Assembly to-day. The

debate was a very lively one, and there were sharp passage-at-arms between Sir Nazimuddin, Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, and Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee.

Mr. J. C. Gupta (Congress) moved the following adjournment motion:—
“The business of the Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the failure of the Bengal Government to set at liberty persons purported to have been detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules, in spite of the decision of the Calcutta High Court and the recent decision of the Federal Court of India declaring the procedure adopted by the Bengal Government regarding detention as contrary to law and improper.”

Initiating the debate Mr. Gupta said that the subject-matter of the adjournment was of the greatest concern to every section of the Indian population. For years together they had been familiar with the arbitrary detention and conviction under lawless laws and at the present this had reached a staggering proportion even according to the Indian standard. After describing the circumstances Mr. Gupta said that the 8 persons were arrested in the absence of the Home Minister and the Governor in the precincts of the Calcutta High Court. Who gave the order for the arrest, enquired Mr. Gupta. As regards other security prisoners detained illegally, Mr. Gupta said they were arrested at the time of the August movement for which the Government were responsible. Because they infuriated the people by arresting the leaders the Government were ultimately responsible for the August movement. If the Home Minister was true to the Moslem League principle, if he was true to his own province, what he should do was not to show any favour but to act in legal manner and release these security prisoners.

Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu enquired of the Home Minister whether the Government had the courage to accept the decision of the Calcutta High Court and the Federal Court of India and to release the prisoners. Why should not the responsible Government of to-day, servants of the Legislature, released those prisoners arrested and detained under Rule 26?

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee said that the question of the detention of the security prisoners under Rule 26 went before the High Court and the Federal Court. It was true that after the judgments of these two courts, an Ordinance had been passed which the Federal Court had held to be legal. But they were considering the detention of political prisoners under Rule 129 in the first instance which by an ad hoc order of the Bengal Government were converted into cases under Rule 26, and the Federal Court had held detention of such persons under these orders as illegal. The persons were then detained under Reg. III of 1818, and their case had gone before the High Court. The High Court had not yet pronounced judgment. The position was that the High Court pronounced their detention under the Defence of India Rules as illegal, but since they must be clapped behind the prison bars they were arrested within the Court precincts, before they had any opportunity of even feeling that they had been released from illegal detention, under Reg. III of 1818. At that time the Home Minister was probably not present, the Governor of Bengal was not in Calcutta. The question the people of Bengal wanted to put to the Home Minister was a very simple one: Was this order Regulation III initiated and approved by the Home Minister, or initiated and approved by the Governor? If the Home Minister said that he himself took the responsibility of rearresting them under Reg. III, the people of Bengal would like to know the reasons which justified the Home Minister to clap these persons behind the prison bars?

The next question they wanted to put to the Home Minister was this. The Federal Court and the High Court of Calcutta pronounced judgment that not only the detention of these persons were illegal but the detention of all persons under the ad hoc order of 1943 was illegal. There were to-day in prisons in Bengal a large number of persons, and the Federal Court had directed that they were being detained illegally. “Are we living within the frame of a civilised Government?” Dr. Mookerjee inquired.

“We are told,” Dr. Mookerjee continued, “that many things are happening to-day in countries which are under the control of the Nazis. What is the farce that is going on in Bengal? You have to-day your system of administration, you have your judiciary. The highest court in India has already held that the detention of these persons is illegal. You have clapped some of them behind the prison bars under Regulation III. But there are persons—and they constitute the majority—who are still being detained under Rule 26 which has been declared illegal. Why? How is it possible? Is not this deliberate flouting of the highest

court of the land? Does the Home Minister take the full responsibility of the illegal detention of these persons?" Dr. Mookerjee continued that he could well appreciate the difficulties of the Home Minister; there were many difficulties in his way. But if it was that Sir Nazimuddin had no say in this illegal detention, he must take the House into full confidence. As regards the general question of release of political prisoners, Dr. Mookerjee proceeded, he appreciated that these persons were detained at a time when there was a political upheaval in the country and in this province. But times had changed. To-day it was essential that an atmosphere must be created so that the people unitedly could face the terrible catastrophe that was on them. Nobody knew what was going to happen the next day. They needed all resources in men and material pooled together. Dr. Mookerjee was informed that a representation had come from these security prisoners saying that they would unconditionally join in the relief work. Asking the Home Minister to increase the allowances granted to the families of these security prisoners, Dr. Mookerjee said that he was receiving pathetic letters from families. It was the duty of Government to see that the families of these persons did not starve.

Mr. *Abdur Rahaman Siddiqi*, attacking Dr. Mookerjee, inquired why he accepted office when Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose was arrested. Dr. Mookerjee and his other colleagues practically walked over the dead body of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose.

Dr. *Mookerjee*: He was arrested before we were Ministers.

Mr. *Santosh Kumar Rasu*: With Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose's blessing and support.

Mr. *Siddiqi*: If they have any conscience, any sense of honesty, they should never show their faces in this House. This kind of double playing is really disgraceful. We are not playing double: you put them into jails, and you are now shouting for them. You are unfit to utter one word about it.

A voice: Nonsense.

Mr. *Siddiqi* continued that there were people who were more honest, who could get up and say: "I am going to do this." "Our colleagues in the Assembly and other citizens who have lost their liberty are now in safer hands; not in the hands of those who sent them to prison, and maintained their existence by licking the boots of the Government of India."

A voice: You lick the boots.

Mr. *Siddiqi*: I do not lick the boots of Government. I never was a Minister.

A voice: You lick the boots of lesser men.

Mr. *Santosh Kumar Basu*: You lie under the boots.

Mr. *Siddiqi*: Will you allow me to continue. There is no man in this House who would like to deal with this problem with the levity and insincerity as demonstrated by the members Opposite. If Dr. Mookerjee is sincere he will find me as one of his important lieutenants. But if the Mussalmans are rascals. . . .

Dr. *Mookerjee*: I never said that Mussalmans are rascals.

Shouts from the Opposition insisting Mr. *Siddiqi* to withdraw the expression, and the noise was so loud that Mr. *Siddiqi* had to resume his seat.

Mr. *Speaker*: If such a statement has been made by any member in this House I will take all necessary steps to expunge it. I have not heard any member of the Opposition using this expression, and, therefore, I think it was quite improper for Mr. *Siddiqi* to introduce matter which was never uttered.

Shouts: Withdraw, withdraw, rang out from the Opposition benches. It was impossible for Mr. *Siddiqi* to proceed with his speech.

Mr. *Speaker*: I will expunge that expression from the proceedings of this House.

Mr. *Siddiqi*: This word was not used, but the meaning behind the speeches conveyed that. It is within my right, Sir, to say what I like so long as I do not break the rules of the House.

Mr. *Speaker*: Mr. *Siddiqi*, will you sit down, please. It was far from my intention to stop you from speaking. You cannot bring in an expression which has not been used in this House.

Mr. *Siddiqi*: Certainly, I have got the right to interpret the speeches.

Mr. *Speaker*: You know that nobody in this House used the expression that a Mussalman was a rascal. I say with all the emphasis and dignity I command that the whole House will say that nobody has uttered an expression like this. I will never tolerate any expression casting reflection on any community—

Hindu and Mussalman. "Rascals" etc. are expressions which ought not to be tolerated in this House. The *Speaker* added: I am here as the custodian of the rights and privileges of the members of this House, and I have every right to stop interpretation of any speech of any member in that perverse way.

Mr. Siddiqi: I obey your rulings, Sir.

At this stage, time being over Mr. Siddiqi took his seat.

Sir Nazimuddin, Home Minister, said that after the speech of Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi he had very little to add. Mr. Siddiqi had so thoroughly exposed the speakers in support of the adjournment motion that the Home Minister was sure by now that members of this House and the people of the province would realise that this adjournment motion was merely a 'political claptrap.' The persons who had to-day taken the leading part in the debate were those persons who were responsible for the sending in of the major portion of the present security prisoners into jail. The injured innocence of Mr. J. C. Gupta was certainly a matter of surprise. It was his leader who was responsible for the existence of the previous Ministry. Might Sir Nazimuddin remind him that his leader and his party gave consistent support to the Ministry who sent these people to jails.

Cries of 'no' 'no' from the Opposition benches.

The Home Minister continued that very conveniently the leader of the Opposition, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, had not taken any part in this debate. Various strictures in judgments referred to the action of the Ministry when the present leader of the Opposition was in charge, and who was responsible for giving approval and sanction to the procedure which had so roundly been condemned by them. The Home Minister maintained that there was no previous record, as far as he was aware, where the Ministry deliberately released members of the Opposition before the commencement of the session of the legislature so that those released members might come and attend the meetings.

A voice: How many you have released, and how many are still in prison?

The Home Minister continued that the point was that so far as the Federal Court judgment was concerned, it referred only to the 8 persons against whom Reg. III was applied.

Cries of 'no' 'no' from the Opposition benches.

Sir Nazimuddin: It is no use shouting 'no'

Dr. S. Mookerjee: Have you read the judgment at all?

Sir Nazimuddin: So far as our legal advisers are concerned they are of the opinion that the judgment of the Federal Court referred to these eight persons detained under Reg. III; and even out of these 8 persons, two have already been released. When we are satisfied that the release can be made without jeopardising the safety of the province (cries of oh! oh! from the Opposition benches), we will do so. So far as other security prisoners are concerned, they have got their right to move *habeas corpus* petitions, and we undertake not only to forward but to give legal facilities for presentation of these petitions before the Court.

Dr. N. Sanyal: Will you bear the expenses?

Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee: That does not depend upon you.

Sir Nazimuddin continued that no court, either the Federal Court or the High Court of Calcutta, had pronounced any opinion as regards the merits of the detention of these persons, i. e., there was a technical flaw in the procedure laid down for the detention. But the question he would like to ask to the members Opposite and Dr. Mookerjee was this: Do they realise why these persons are detained (Shouts: No) Do they realise to what risk the province would be exposed if these persons are released?—it meant giving assistance to the enemy who may invade our province.

Mr. J. C. Gupta: They will fight more bitterly than yourself.

Sir Nazimuddin: I am surprised that members of the Opposition are taking this attitude. There would be no justification for their detention if they would not do so. I cannot understand how our members Opposite can say that they (the security prisoners) would not do so, when they (Opposition) themselves were responsible for putting them into the jails. May I ask, if you knew that everyone of these security prisoners is innocent, why you put them into the prisons?

"So far as the Congress workers are concerned," Sir Nazimuddin said, "the major portion of them have been released." (A Voice from the Opposition: It is not a fact.) "So far as members of the subversive organizations are concerned, their activities are there. I maintain—and in this I take the full responsibility (I am not one of those who do not take responsibility). I have had the advantage of discussion, not only with the officials of the D. I. G. and I. B., but with some

of the leaders of the various subversive organizations, and I have gone to a great length in trying to convince myself whether there was justification or not for their detention. I may state that when we first took office in 1937 there were 2500 prisoners, and released everyone of them; and again when we started rearresting some of them, it was done with great care, and whatever may be said about the procedure, at one time arrests were made until previous approval was taken and the cases of the persons discussed. I may state that I have refused to put under arrest members of the *Jugantar* party; and only when I was in Hazaribagh that the then Home Minister agreed to their detention. I maintain that I took particular care, and whenever any case is brought to my notice I try to go into it. The procedure has been declared illegal. And we are taking steps to review all these cases according to the procedure which will be approved by the High Court, and whenever we will find any person innocent, he will be released. We are trying to expedite the release but members of the House must realise that enemy broadcasting from Saigon etc. are calling upon these people to try to be active so far as sabotage is concerned. They must realise they are making continuous efforts. There are persons here like Mr. Jai Prakash Narain who was in Calcutta a few days ago who are trying to organize sabotage.

Voice from the Opposition: How do you know? Why did not you arrest Mr. Jai Prakash Narain?

Sir Nazimuddin said that information was received after Jai Prakash Narain left Calcutta. He could say this that there were persons, and many Congress members had agreed with the Home Minister, who were trying to be active for subversive work. As an example, Sir Nazimuddin referred to the attacks said to have been made on the members of the Communist party, because the Communist party wanted to fight the Axis.

At this stage the time being up, Sir Nazimuddin resumed his seat. The adjournment motion was then put to the vote, and defeated by 62 to 111 votes. The House then adjourned.

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

17th. SEPTEMBER:—*Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee* moved a special motion to-day stating inter alia that the Ministry had failed to discharge the elementary responsibility of any civilised Government by its failure to save human lives and to procure for the people essential commodities for their bare existence. *Dr. Mookerjee* said that since the Assembly last discussed the food situation, it had dangerously deteriorated and to-day it presented problems of a far-reaching character. The statement of the Civil Supplies Minister was utterly unsatisfactory. It was empty-worded and visionless. Judged by actual results, the food policy of Government had miserably failed. *Dr. Mookerjee* would not refer to the personal abuses heaped upon him and others who were trying to alleviate human sufferings by Mr. Subawardy. Such attacks should be treated with the contempt they deserved. They were the outcome of masterly incompetence and impudence.

To-day Bengal stood face to face before an unprecedented condition of misery and destitution. Reports of suicide, desertion of families and children, of dead bodies lying uncared for were pouring in from different parts of Bengal. For days and weeks people were allowed to die on the streets of Calcutta and they were refused admission into hospitals, although A.R.P. beds were lying vacant. "In Contal jackals and dogs had been freely feeding themselves on dead bodies, and such animals were ordered to be shot. The sight of destitute and starving people in Calcutta, heart rending as it is, is nothing compared to what is happening in distant towns and villages."

Continuing, *Dr. Mookerjee* said that while the suffering of the poorest classes, the landless, homeless and penniless had been immense, people belonging to the middle class families with fixed income or with reduced income barely sufficient in ordinary times to keep their body and soul together were to-day under-going a tragic process of slow and painful extinction. "I earnestly call upon the Home Secretary of the Government of India," *Dr. Mooketjee* said, "to visit this province and then seek to criticise men on the spot for over-dramatisation of Bengal's woeful tale. After thankfully recalling the sympathy and help which came from all parts of India for the distressed in Bengal, *Dr. Mookerjee* said that his first charge against Government was that its policy of procurement from within and without had been open to grave objection. "The scheme of purchase of 'aus' paddy had been another 'criminal' blunder placing the rural areas in a state of utter helplessness. Proceeding, *Dr. Mookerjee* said that the original quota allotted to this

province by the Government of India regarding supplies from outside was reduced in July last. Why did the Bengal Ministry agree to such deduction? They were told that the Ministry had no option because the Government of India was adamant. Why did not Mr. Suhrawardy resigned as a protest? Sir Jawla Prosad Srivastava had stated at a conference that the Bengal Ministry agreed to the reduction.

Mr. *Suhrawardy*: No. I did not agree.

Dr. *Mookerjee*: The Food Member said you agreed. Why did not the Ministry resist the reduction and if Bengal was unjustly treated resign rather than surrender for the sake of sticking to office? Proceeding, Dr. Mookerjee demanded a clear statement as regards the stocks that had come into the province. It appeared from the statement of the Punjab Minister that while the people of Bengal were starving, the Bengal Government was merrily carrying on a scheme of profiteering by selling wheat at a much higher price than that at which it had purchased from the Punjab.

In this connexion Dr. Mookerjee asked Mr. Suhrawardy to lay a statement before the House on the following points: (1) Total payments or advances made to Ispahanis and its dates and amounts of such payments; (2) Copy of an agreement between Government and Ispahanis; (3) the dates on which the places from where, the persons or agents from whom and the prices at which purchases had been made by Ispahanis from outside Bengal. Dr. Mookerjee alleged that more than 4½ crores of rupees from the public revenue had been paid to Ispahanis and Bengal had the right to know specially because of the political connection between the firm and the Minister whether every pice of this colossal sum was properly accounted for.

Dr. Mookerjee then criticised the promulgation of price control orders without arranging for supplies. "Even to-day," Dr. Mookerjee declared, "Rice was being purchased by Government agents both at controlled rates and above and the rural areas are being steadily and deliberately denuded of stocks." Dr. Mookerjee complained that even the Government of India was purchasing sugar at Rs. 50 per maund, a price which was higher than the controlled rate. This had driven sugar to black market. "We are utterly dissatisfied with the system of distribution. Even if foodgrains arrive from different parts of India, we have no confidence in the ability, integrity and honesty of the present Government so as to be able to say that a fair and just and equitable distribution will take place," Dr. Mookerjee said.

"There can be only one solution to save Bengal," Dr. Mookerjee said, "and it is cent per cent control over supply, prices and distributions, to be carried on by an agency, enjoying 100 per cent confidence of the people. This means the trader and the public must be called upon to make sacrifice for the common good of all and they must have implicit faith in the Government of the day. Corruption and jobbery must be ruthlessly suppressed whether among officials, traders or the public." Let us make our position abundantly clear, Dr. Mookerjee went on to say. "We do not want food to be made the plaything of politics. It is not nature's hand alone that is giving Bengal a death blow. Political maladministration lies at the root of the present catastrophe and no lasting solution can come until India is economically and politically free. If there had been a truly national Government enjoying full power and responsibility at the head of the country and the province instead of it being ruled by the iron hand of oppressors and exploiters, the food problem of Bengal and India would have been solved without difficulty. As regards the future they offer a hand of co-operation. Let the policy of Government be determined and carried out in a manner which would be acceptable to all parties and sections, and they, Dr. Mookerjee remarked, should be prepared to do everything possible to save the situation. The supreme need of the hour was unity and oneness of mind.

Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal* (Congress) moved the following resolution:—"This Assembly is of opinion that (I) the statement made by the Hon. Minister-in-Charge, Civil Supplies in the Assembly on the 15th instant in extremely disappointing and unsatisfactory, particularly in so far as it does not indicate Government's immediate intention as yet to undertake the maintenance of food supply for the entire population, specially the rural population and the middle classes, during the emergency and in so far as it shows the absence of any comprehensive scheme for the equitable distribution of all available stock of food grains from within or from without the province, with the introduction of necessary rationing scheme for urban areas. (II) immediate steps should be taken to isolate the big consuming areas like

Calcutta and Howrah with their industrial suburb as Chittagong, Dacca, Narayanganj and big evacuee camps from the rest of Bengal with a view to maintain the supplies in such areas with the imports from outside and to retain the supplies in rural Bengal for local consumption as far as practicable, supplementing the same with surpluses of the foodgrains from outside Bengal to relieve specially deficit areas. (III) immediate steps should be taken to prevent the purchase of Aus paddy and rice and also the coming Aman by traders from outside, whether Government agents or others, at competitive prices, and to prohibit the export of such foodgrains to the bigger consuming centres isolated as above. (IV) Immediate steps should be taken to reorganise the village food committees set up during the food drive and to organise union and village relief committees with adequate representation of all progressive parties and organisation and to give effect to a comprehensive scheme of relief for all classes determined in consultation with the leaders of public opinion." Dr. Sanyal said that from the very beginning of the food crisis in the province his party insisted on one approach to the question and that was to act unitedly.

Maulvi Syed Badrudduja (Mayor) gave a graphic account of what is taking place in Bengal at the present moment. Such tragic scenes of human miseries might not produce any impression upon the present Government but they had very rightly produced the deepest impressions on the public mind outside. Referring to the ignorance of well-informed people outside about the position of Bengal complained of by Mr. Suhrawardy, the speaker asked, would Mr. Suhrawardy refresh his own memories and try to remember aright that it was his deliberate insistence in season and out of seasons that there was no shortage of foodgrains that had been responsible for this impression outside? It was contended in responsible quarters that owing to deliberate bungling, and indifferent handling of the food situation and most reckless indifference of the present Government to the sufferings of the people that the situation had gone beyond control. It was not for nothing therefore that a Food Commissioner had suddenly been appointed to exercise control and supervision of the food situation in the province. It gave them a sense of relief that under the regime of the new Governor a healthy tone had been introduced into the administration of Bengal.

Mr. Dharendra Nath Dutta (Congress) said that if the situation was analysed it would be found that the steps taken by the Ministry were absolutely unsatisfactory. Let them, therefore, sit together and find out the way to solve the difficulty. If it was not solved at least one crore Bengalees would die. As it was difficult to move in Calcutta streets so was the case with the district towns. On Sunday last while he was in the district town of Comilla he found a corpse of a child near the house of the richest man of the locality. Having noticed such corpses here and there their soft feelings were becoming gradually dull. But could they imagine in normal time a full-grown child dying because he could not secure food for sustenance? It appeared to him that their hearts were being steelled. Why the situation had become what it was now? There was no doubt bungling but there was corruption and greed too. It was impossible to check this corruption to their utter shame. This greed was no longer restricted among the traders and shopkeepers but to their misfortune it was to be noticed among the rich agriculturists too. They should unitedly appeal to these people who were their own people to give rice in order to feed the poorer people. There were again the red-tapism and the bureaucratic indifference and if there was the European officer he was drawing the conclusion that the people would have suffered more terribly if there was enemy invasion. There was thus on one side callousness and indifference and on the other greed and this could be fought only if there was united effort made and he appealed to the Ministry to make that possible in the face of death and starvation. If they could not do that, if they could not solve the problem or save human lives and stop the bribery and corruption then the only honourable course left open to them was to resign.

Mr. Narendra Nath Das (Hindu Mahasabha) said that in the town of Barisal only the other day a dog devoured a corpse. If that was possible in a town like Barisal, the district capital of the granary of Bengal, everybody could realise what was taking place in the interior. The speaker went to the Sub-division of Bhola, the most distressed spot of the district. There in the year of 1943 in the open markets children and infants were being sold. (Voice from the Ministerialist party: Who are purchasing them?)

Mr. Das : Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan, the Chairman of the district

Board of Barisal would be able to tell you that it was the rich agriculturists who were purchasing them.

Proceeding Mr. Das said that the picture which he saw in the interior of Barisal tallied faithfully the picture given in the *Ananda Math* by *Bankim Chandra Chatterjee*. The greed and corruption had combined to strangle into death the poor. He gave an instance where the issuing of ration cards from 1000 had been reduced to 200 at the instance of the Government officers who were however careful in incorporating into this 200 cards the names of their own servants and menials and thereby elbowing out the helpless and starved people of the locality. He also thought that the scale of five chatak of food as scheduled by the Government could not sustain the starved for long.

Mr. A. M. L. Rahman gave a graphic description of the tragic situation now obtaining in Nilphamari where he himself went and saw the miseries of the people with his own eyes. The subdivisional town was littered with the dead and the dying and if no succour was immediately despatched the whole area would be affected so much that it would be difficult to save the people. He also saw the hospital where the arrangements for giving medical aid was poor and something must be done in this respect if the people were to be saved.

Maulvi Abul Hashim (Moslem League) said that though he had minor difference with the Ministry, he did not think he had much to say against the general policy they had adopted for the solution of the food problem. The present Ministry, he said, had however signally failed in executing their food policy. Mr. Suhrawardy had become so busy that he had become absolutely immobile. Mr. Suhrawardy was an intelligent person, a man with vision and foresight, but skill he lacked in generosity of heart. There was the flood in Burdwan, but Mr. Suhrawardy did not move out of Calcutta. The execution of the policy had been left, the speaker complained, in the hands of probationer Sub-Deputy Magistrates and junior officers. The District Magistrate or the Sub-Divisional Officer did not come or had no interest about the fulfilment of promises made by the Hon. Minister. Everyone was sitting tight and the execution of the policy left to take care of itself. Government had not been able to open free kitchens, but non-official organizations had already opened a free kitchen. "I beg of you, Mr. Suhrawardy, that you should move out of Calcutta, mix with the masses and see that Executives carried out the policy laid down by you."

Mr. D. N. Sen said that the speech of Mr. Suhrawardy contained much smoke but little fire. There was much thunder against hoarders, stockists and traders. He promised Bengal with a number of promises for the present and the future, just as he had done in the past. Meanwhile, the piteous wailings of the hungry millions were rending the Bengal's sky and men, women and children were dying of starvation in thousands. Mr. Sen said that any scheme of rationing that might be embarked upon by Government should operate through normal trade channels. Government should also set up an Advisory Committee of non-officials and representatives of trade to act as a liaison between Government, trade and the public. The House at this stage adjourned.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

18th. SEPTEMBER:—"Call it famine or call it whatever you like, the economic situation in Bengal to-day had no 'precedence' in history," observed Mr. T. C. Goswami, Finance Minister, replying to the debate on the budget estimates of the Government of Bengal for 1943-44 in the Assembly this morning. Mr. Goswami thought that the Government of India should take responsibility in a very much larger measure for the expenditure that the Bengal Government had been forced to incur owing to conditions arising out of the war. Referring to the question of the release of political prisoners, the Finance Minister said that the pace of release, instead of being accelerated, had somewhat slowed down. There were several causes, but he hoped that in the next few months it would be possible for the Government to release many more prisoners. In this connection, he regretted their inability to do anything in the case of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, who was under detention.

Participating in the debate, Mr. A. R. Siddiqi (Ministerialist Party) urged that the United Nation must accept the question of relieving the distress of Bengal as a major responsibility of the war.

Speaking on behalf of the European Group, Mr. D. R. Gladding remarked that the Bengal Government had a strong case for real financial assistance from the Centre and not merely for loans.

Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal (Bose Group in opposition) alleged corruption in the execution of the food policy of Government and remarked that there could be no improvement in the situation unless this was remedied. Speaking about the release of political prisoners, he said that the present Government made a good beginning, but he failed to understand why the case of release had been slowed down. He held the view that there would be no adverse effect on the safety of the province or on the Government if all political prisoners were released. The Assembly then adjourned.

DEMAND FOR DECLARATION OF FAMINE IN BENGAL

20th. SEPTEMBER:—The Assembly, by 69 to 115 votes, rejected the cut motion of *Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhury* of Bose group who wanted to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to declare famine in Bengal and organise relief in accordance with the provisions of the Famine Code. The Hon. Mr. T. N. Mukerjee stated that even without declaring famine, Government were adopting measures according to provisions laid down in the Code. This statement of Mr. Mukerjee evoked sharp protests from the Opposition, consisting of the Congress, Bose group, Nationalist and the Krishak Praja parties. The motion was then put to vote and lost.

Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhury said that he did not think that Government had a clear realisation of the situation; hundreds and thousands were dying. The provision for expenditure under this head was so meagre that it could not even touch the fringe of the problem. Government had stated that 2200 kitchens had been opened and about 500 people were being daily fed from each of the kitchens. In the last session of the Assembly in July, the Opposition pressed the point that Government should declare famine in Bengal and take the full responsibility of feeding the entire population. That suggestion was turned down by Government, and no action was taken with the result that a very large number of deaths had occurred and more were on the verge of exhaustion. Continuing, *Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhury* said that only by the middle of August instructions with regard to relief measures were issued to all local officers by the Revenue Secretary. No mention was made in those instructions either of how to open kitchens or distribution of relief according to the famine code. On the other hand, it was emphasized that stress was laid by Government on the necessity of giving "absolute minimum" relief. Mr. Suhrawardy the order day stated that half-hearted measures would meet the most distressing situation in Bengal: Government must give relief in the fullest possible measure, otherwise it would mean death and starvation for many. What was the position? In Calcutta alone up to the 15th of September, 1943, at least 300 persons had died of starvation.

Mr. *Suhrawardy*:—They all came from mofussil.

Mr. *Rai Chaudhuri*:—That may be; but the figures were gradually going up. If action was taken by Government from the very beginning according to the instructions laid down in the Famine Code, so many deaths would not have occurred. Government, he said, was guilty of gross neglect of duty towards the people and was responsible for the deaths of these people. It was due to the failure of relief measures organized by Government that so many deaths had taken place. In the face of this terrible condition prevailing all over Bengal, Mr. *Rai Chaudhuri* asked his fellow legislators to support his cut motion, or take upon themselves the responsibility of the deaths of so many persons if they opposed it.

Mr. J. W. R. Steven moved a cut motion to raise a discussion about the necessity for proper central co-ordination and direction of relief measures. Mr. Steven said that there must be central direction of relief measures and there must be a uniform policy. There had been magnificent non-official and official efforts to relieve distress in this province, but they had been often of haphazard and piecemeal character and unrelated to each other. He suggested that the recently appointed Joint Secretary to the Revenue Department should be director of relief measures, an executive touring officer, not a secretariat official who would sit in Writers' Buildings. He should have a touring staff of supervisors, who would co-ordinate and supervise relief efforts throughout the province. Continuing Mr. Steven emphasised the need for a uniform policy as regards the form of relief measures. What was happening now was that in one area grain doles were being handed out and in an adjoining area there were gruel kitchens. The result was that the kitchens were not a success as the villagers preferred the doles. There was no doubt that owing to the scarcity of supplies the method of gruel kitchens must be generally adopted and it was, therefore, important that there should be a

uniform policy of opening gruel kitchens in preference to giving grain or cash doles. Proceeding the speaker dwelt on the need for clear and definite instructions to local officers. "In our opinion the printed instructions dated August 30th issued to all district officers by the Revenue Department are an example of what instructions should not be," he remarked. "We are dealing with conditions of acute food shortage", Mr. Steven went on to say", and instructions should be designed to meet these emergency conditions. What are we to think of instructions when ask union relief committees as their first and most important duty to their degree of distress." In the opinion of the European group it was the job of all local officers to prevent starvation in their areas. All local officers should be relief officers and for that purpose should have necessary power in their respective jurisdiction: It was the job of the local officers to know the position in their respective areas to estimate requirements over and above local resources, and to apply for assistance if local resources were not sufficient to prevent starvation. Unless relief committees should certainly be formed and should be used for assisting in collecting local resources, for providing volunteers for running gruel kitchens etc., and for exposing hoarders and price control offenders. Concluding, Mr. Steven referred to the Central Relief Fund the opening of which was announced by Mr. Suhrawardy. An appeal was issued by the Chief Minister for contributions to this fund, but they were still in the "dark" as to how to be administered. They were given to understand that a representative committee was to be set up. But they would like to know why this committee had not yet been formed and what were the intentions of Government with regard to the administration of this fund and in particular with regard to the allocation of contributions to it. "In fact", Mr. Steven emphasised, "substantial contributions to the Central Relief Fund are being held up owing to uncertainty with regard to its administrations. We would urge that Government should make an immediate declaration of their intention with regard to this fund."

Khan Bahadur A. M. L. Rahman moved a cut motion to discuss about the inadequacy of relief in distressed areas. He said that in spite of all the solemn assurances of Government that relief was being given, the fact remained that people were dying in thousands all over Bengal. He referred particularly to the serious condition prevailing in Nilphamari and said that he had a telegram from the president of a very important relief organisation that there was total scarcity of rice in this sub-division since 11th. of this month. Public organisations stood helpless before a bewailing suffering humanity. In spite of their best intention, in spite of money at their disposal they could not obtain foodgrains to save the dying and the destitute. Endless conferences, deputations and meetings had not succeeded in expediting despatch of foodgrains. It was agreed on all hands that the situation was desperate and required a drastic remedy. They had been told of the thousands of tons of food grains coming in Bengal; they read every day of the magnificent efforts of the sister provinces to send succour to this unfortunate land of theirs, but where were they and why were they not being rushed? If there was a railway accident, a relief train was rushed at moment's notice and was it not a cruel irony of fate that a few wagons were not available now to send relief to places where people had died and were still dying in hundreds, if not in thousands? What was there to prevent Government from sending foodgrains by road either in carts or in lorries and in river districts by boats, if necessary?

Replying to the debate, Hon. Mr. *Tarak Nath Mukherjee* said that suggestions made by the last speaker would receive the immediate consideration of the Government. As regards the cut motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhury that the Government should declare famine in Bengal, Mr. Mukherjee said that according to the Famine Code and Famine Manual, Government had to arrange for the sale of foodgrains at subsidised rate which the Government were already doing. The Famine Code also laid down that for the distribution of clothes etc. in the worst affected areas Government should take recourse to Charitable Funds.

Mr. *J. C. Gupta*: What has the Famine Code to do with the Charitable Fund?

Mr. *Mukherjee*: I am placing before the House the implication underlying the declaration of famine by the Government. Proceeding, Mr. Mukherjee said that the Code said that the supply of diet to patients had got to be made from the public funds. But the Government were already arranging that out of the provincial revenue in some of the worst affected areas. He added that Government had also made arrangements for the purchase of cattle etc., from the provincial revenue although the Famine code contemplated that that had to be done from

the Obaritable Fund. Replying to the criticisms that stocks of rice seized and hoarded by the Government were not released for public use, Mr. Mukherjee said that a good portion of that rice had been used for giving relief to the famine affected area in Bankura.

Mr. *Dhirendra Nath Dutta* (Congress): We have received letters from our constituencies that rice was not available and that people were dying.....

Mr. *Speaker*: Will you please resume your seat and allow the Hon. Minister to conclude his speech.

Mr. *Mukherjee*: People do not make a distinction between relief and food supply although just at the present moment the two are interlinked. At the present moment we are discussing about the relief work and not food supply is primarily the concern of the Civil Supplies Department.

(Cries from the Opposition Benches: "It is all nonsense".)

Mr. *Atul Sen*: Sir, we mean no disrespect to you, but we do not like to hear "this nonsense".

Mr. *Narendra Nath Das*: He is making a false statement.

The Ministerialist Benches took exception to this and there were shouts and counter-shoutings.

The *Speaker*: You may not be satisfied with what the Hon. Minister is saying but that does not give you the right to create any disturbance in the House. The *Speaker* added that it appeared to him that the House, at least the Opposition, were not in a mood to listen to the Hon. Minister at this late hour. He was giving certain figures and it appeared to him that the statement that the Minister was going to make might be of use to the House. But as the House was not in a mood to listen he was not going to detain the House longer during this month of Ramzan. He would therefore put the motions to vote and would ask the Hon. Minister to conclude his speech in a few minutes' time.

The cut motion of *Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhury* was then put to vote and lost, 69 voting for it and 115 against.

The original demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head—famine put by the Minister was then carried by the House. Earlier, the House passed the demands for grant of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head—Medical and Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head—Public Health. All the cut motions were lost without any division. The House was then adjourned.

DISAPPEARANCE OF RICE FROM MARKETS

21st. SEPTEMBER:—At the outset of the day's proceedings, Mr. *Kiran Sankar Roy*, leader of the Congress Party, demanded a statement from Government on the "complete disappearance of rice from the markets, particularly in the rural areas." He remarked that without an assurance from the Minister in charge that rice would be made available in the markets, the whole proceedings of the legislature became a farce. He said that with the leave of the House he wanted to draw the attention of the House, particularly the attention of Government to the terrible situation which had arisen in the province especially in the rural areas because of the complete disappearance of rice from the market. "I do not want to raise controversial issues as to the reasons of this disappearance of rice and other food grains. I suppose it will be universally admitted that the situation is terrible because of this disappearance. I have received numerous telegrams, and I am sure members of this House have also received such telegrams that the situation is desperate. I would request the Hon'ble Chief Minister and I am sorry that the Hon. Minister for Civil Supplies is absent (he has been very seldom present in the House during this session)—to make a statement on behalf of Government on this situation. I want to know what steps Government have taken to ensure supply of rice and other foodgrains in the market; if no steps have been taken the reason why; and if steps have been taken why then rice is unavailable in the markets. "I am not sure", Mr. Roy went on to say, "if Government would be able to make a statement to-day. It may be made to-morrow (Wednesday). I feel, and I am sure every member of this House will support me, that Government should give us an assurance that rice and other foodgrains will be made available to the people. In the absence of such an assurance and also in view of the fact that deaths from starvation are on the increase the whole proceedings of this House become unreal. I do not mean any reflection on the House, but the whole thing seems to be a farce.....(A voice from the Opposition: Mockery.)

Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal*: Give us food or get out.

Mr. Roy having resumed his seat, Dr. *Shyama Prosad Mookerjee* rose to draw the attention of Government to certain points in this regard. Dr. Mookerjee said he wanted to draw the attention of Government to the following facts :

"I have received during the last three days telegrams from the following places : Pirozepur, Hossainpur, Brahmanbaria, Madaripur, Barisal, Khulna, Narsindi, Narail, Nilphamari, Manickgunge, Chandpur and Ghatal and other places reporting that no rice is available and there is terrible suffering. These telegrams are from non-official persons and organizations. We have approached the district magistrates and sub-divisional officers during the last few days inquiring whether relief work should be started within their respective jurisdiction.

Dr. Mookerjee said he had received replies from the district and sub-divisional officers who had stated that "relief" was necessary, non-official efforts would be gratefully appreciated but no foodgrains are available locally.

TREATMENT OF SECURITY PRISONERS

Hon. *Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin* then moved that a sum of Rs. 56,74,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28-Jails and Convict Settlements."

Mr. *Haripada Chatterjee* (Congress) moved a cut motion to raise a discussion about "the general policy of Government in the matter of administration of Jail and Convict Settlements, the failure of Government to deal with the jail officers even in cases when the attention of Government is drawn to their vagaries : treatment of ordinary prisoners as well as of security prisoners in jails ; and the family allowances of the security prisoners." Mr. Chatterjee alleged that the present European jailor of a particular Jail was a man who was not conversant with the jail codes. The Jail authorities could not provide a security prisoner with shirts and clothes and thus permitted to use his own clothes but the jailor assaulted him because he happened to put on ganjis. Mr. Chatterjee also alleged that without any reason and without giving a warning a warder assaulted sleeping security prisoners in the jail. After the incident, however, the jail authorities expressed their regret and apologised to the security prisoners. He knew that the Ministry had no power to introduce any revolutionary reforms, but he only placed these matters before them if they could do anything.

Dr. *Shyama Prosad Mookerjee* drew the attention of the Home Minister to the unsatisfactory nature of arrangements for rendering medical treatment to prisoners. Dr. Mookerjee also complained about "assaults" on prisoners. Dr. Mookerjee then strongly pleaded for increasing the family allowances of security prisoners and asked the Home Minister to issue an "ad hoc" order increasing the allowances.

Replying to the debate, Hon. *Sir Nazimuddin* said that he did not want to take much time in answering to Dr. Mookerjee because with due respect to the speaker he held that he did not consider what Dr. Mookerjee had stated was relevant. He would however make it clear that the policy of the Government was to release all whom Dr. Mookerjee had put in jail, people put into jail not only by Mr. Fazlul Huq alone but by Dr. Mookerjee as well. (There was interruption from the Opposition benches). Referring to the case of assault alleged by Mr. Haripada Chatterjee, Sir Nazimuddin said that the speaker had himself told the House that those cases were amicably settled and that was the reason why they were not brought to the notice of the authorities.

Replying to the policy of granting allowance, Sir Nazimuddin said that the policy had been very clearly enunciated and those who came within that policy received allowances. Even if there was such a security prisoner who never contributed to the maintenance of his family and yet the family was in a desperate condition, in certain conditions the Government were paying the allowances. Government's responsibility to the family was to the same extent the prisoner was responsible to his family. If there was any delay in giving effect to that policy it was because of the previous regime. The arrears accumulated had been cleared and he hoped there would be no more delay on the point. As far as the question of delay in despatching letters to the security prisoners were concerned he had been told by the I. B. department that arrangements had already been made to reduce 15 to two to three days.

Undoubtedly there were rigours of jail life which was never meant to be pleasant but members should realise that they were passing through a crisis. The total number of prisoners inside the jail were 50 p.c. more than the accommodation available. Were the members of the House willing that dangerous elements to the society such as dacoits, burglars etc., to be set free? He agreed with the

members that the conditions in jails were worse than what they were formerly. Unfortunately they were not in a position to find a solution of the problem. Similarly they did not like the conditions prevailing in hospitals.

In jails they had got to maintain discipline but by that he did not mean oppression and assault. He was prepared when the food situation would ease to seek the assistance of members who were interested in that question to discuss with him about steps to be taken to effect jail reforms to make it possible for the jail life to be more humane.

All the cut motions were then put to vote and lost. The cut motion of Mr. Haripada Chatterjee was put to vote and lost 66 voting for it, 113 voting against.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON FOOD SITUATION

22nd. SEPTEMBER:—When the House met to-day, Mr. *Suhrawardy* read out a written statement, and left the Chamber almost immediately after. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. *Fazlul Huq*, wanted an opportunity to make a statement or put questions to the Minister concerned since he considered the statement of Mr. *Suhrawardy* to be "outrageously false". Mr. *Huq* also took exception to the fact that immediately after reading out the statement Mr. *Suhrawardy* "turned his back on the House and went out."

The Speaker, Mr. *Syed Nausher Ali*, found it difficult to allow Mr. *Huq* to make a statement before the budget discussion fixed for the day was over.

Sharp passage-at-arms between the Speaker, Mr. *Fazlul Huq* and other members of the Opposition followed. Mr. *Kiran Sankar Roy*, Leader of the Congress Party, declared that it was a "shameless mockery to continue with the budget discussion when people are dying for want of food."

In the midst of noise and shouts *Sir Nazimuddin* moved his budget demand. The Speaker held that budget discussion should have precedence over everything, and after a prolonged discussion, the Opposition walked out of the Chamber.

Mr. *H. S. Suhrawardy*, in course of his statement, dealt with problems relating to "greater Calcutta" which was a wholly consuming centre. In this city, rice and other foodgrains were still being distributed to more than 2 million people through the industrial organizations, the Government of India and the Government of Bengal employees' shops, the public utility companies, the railways, the Ordnance factories, the A. R. P. organizations and a number of miscellaneous departments and organizations. About a lakh and 80 thousand maunds of rice per month were distributed through Government controlled shops and centres, i. e., an average of 6,000 maunds a day. Food could be obtained in hotels, restaurants, and eating houses, so that no one who had some money need starve. Atta was being sold through Government controlled shops, through shops under the immediate control of mills and through the industrial organizations—altogether 3,60,000 maunds in the last month. A large number of relief kitchens and cheap canteens were in operation in Calcutta and some organizations were even distributing rice free amongst the middle-class people.

To cater for the residue of the people who did not fall among any of the above categories, Government were taking steps to put more rice, atta and bajra on the markets. Mr. *Suhrawardy* could state that there was no dearth of dal and kalai. The other day, the Minister continued, he went to Jagu Babu's bazar and made enquiries and found that arrangements had been made to supply 100 shops with 4 maunds of rice per day per shop and similar arrangements had been made in some other markets.

The position, he added, was definitely improving, more and more stocks were being placed by Govt. at the disposal of dealers who were prepared to play the game. The wheat supplies from other parts of India had been satisfactory, and it was the first time in the existence of the Ministry that they had substantial stocks which Government would place on the market. "There are plenty of other foodgrains, like dal and kalai in the market which are also food. We are also placing considerable amount of bajra. I could flood the market of Calcutta with bajra," Mr. *Suhrawardy* said, "and that we do not want chaukis to have sufficient bajra in their possession to adulterate the pure wheat products."

"The railways have been instructed not to allow consigners to take their goods away from their sheds without the permission of the Civil Supplies Department. Everyday they send us an account of the arrivals and for the time being we have decided to take all rice and "arhar" dal and mustard seeds consigned to Calcutta in the name of private persons so as to secure equitable distribution."

"Frankly, Sir," Mr. *Suhrawardy* declared, "the steps which are in operation,

and the steps which we are taking and are about to take in course of a day or two will make the situation satisfactory, and there will be no outcry of lack of foodgrains in Calcutta, except for political reason. But there is one thing that I should like to be well known that the distribution from the shops will not be on a wholesale scale. A person wanting a maund of rice all at once will find it difficult to secure it." As regards moffusil, District Magistrates and Sub-divisional Officers had been instructed to get foodgrains from whatever sources they could.

Voices from the Opposition: From where? From the sky. Will they manufacture rice, or get it from the air?

Mr. Suhrawardy continued that it was to be clearly understood that there was no going back on the price control orders and they would be maintained and severer measures would be taken to enforce them.

In conclusion, Mr. Suhrawardy said: "The amount of rice we have been allotted is very meagre compared to our requirements. Wheat and wheat products and bajra are being sent in larger and larger quantities. We must get accustomed to eating those substitute foods, and we shall not be able to satisfy any person who may claim that he must have his customary undiluted rice diet and in the quantities in which he used to get it.

Immediately, after Mr. Suhrawardy had read out his statement, he left the chamber. Just at that moment Mr. S. N. Biswas wanted to know from the Speaker if he could put a question to the Minister.

The Speaker replied that he could not allow any discussion on the subject. The matter before the House was the consideration of the budget.

Mr. Fazlul Huq said: I claim as a right of the Leader of the Opposition to place the point of view of the Opposition on the outrageously false statement made by the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: I have already said that this was not the opportune moment. Yesterday there was a demand for a statement and that demand has been fulfilled and the matter ends with that. There is before the House to-day a most important matter, namely, the consideration of the budget.

Mr. Fazlul Huq replied that he realised the point stressed by the Speaker. But at the same time the Speaker should also realise that Mr. Huq had a duty to himself and to the people of Bengal.

Mr. Speaker: Who is denying that? But at the present moment I think your duty is to confine yourself to the subject before the House.

Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu: Are you, Mr. Speaker, denying the leader of the Opposition his customary right to make a statement?

Mr. Speaker: I have not the least desire; it is far from me to deny to the Opposition a fair and reasonable opportunity of discussing or even an opportunity to the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement. Now it is desirable to remember in this connection what had happened. If the Leader of the Opposition had been to me yesterday to make this demand, that would have been quite proper. He did not do it. Still I allowed another leader of the Opposition of another group to make that statement and I allowed even another group to make an addition to that statement in spite of the opposition of the Hon. Chief Minister. The Hon. Minister of Civil Supplies had made a statement. Due to the importance of the question of food problem, due to the fact that there was a demand and also due to the fact that the statement made was about scarcity of rice I allowed it. Otherwise, I would not have allowed it. After the Minister of Civil Supplies has made his statement, I am sorry I cannot allow the Opposition to make any further statement.

Mr. Huq: I do not want to make a long statement. I want to put questions to the Minister.

The Speaker: I know what it means. You will put certain questions about the statement in the nature of cross-examination.

Mr. Huq: I will put to him questions regarding the statement which I do not accept as true.

The Speaker: Order, Order.

Mr. Huq: I want to put specific questions. It is not a question "I have done this, I have done that and I shall do this". People are dying in thousands and I want to know if this Government cannot stop what is going on.

At this stage the Speaker called on Sir Nazimuddin to move the demand that stood in his name and Sir Nazimuddin got up when there were loud protests from the Opposition benches.

The Speaker: It appears to me that you are not in proper mood to-day.

Mr. *Hug* : I am sorry to say that we are not. We are in hungry mood, we are in eating mood. We want to eat up.

The Speaker again asked Sir Nazimuddin to move his motion.

Mr. *Sasanka Sanyal* : Please do not stand in the way of the statement being made by the Leader of the Opposition. I have in my pocket here a letter written by the secretary of the Muslim League of my district. People are dying there and everybody, I am sure, is receiving such letters. Considering the gravity of the situation the budget discussion is a mockery. Are you going to allow Nero to fiddle while Rome is burning. If that is your order we of the Opposition will not yield.

The Speaker asked Sir Nazimuddin to move his motion when there were again interruptions from the Opposition Benches.

When Sir Nazimuddin resumed his seat the Speaker asked Dr. *Nalinakshya Sanyal* to move his out motion.

Dr. *Sanyal* : In the present temper of the House, particularly when the Leader of the Opposition wants to make a statement which every one will admit is within his right to make, it would be extremely unfair and improper on my part to divert the attention of the House to any other matter which is much less important to-day in relation to our food problem and I would beg of you to allow the Leader of the Opposition to make a full statement on his question which is so desirable. If the Hon. Minister in charge has any sense of proportion he should rise to the occasion and agree to the proposal.

The Speaker : Dr. Sanyal, I called upon you to move your amendment and you have delivered a sermon. What I want to say is that without minimising the extreme importance of the problem, I think you will agree with me that the budget demands should be passed to-day. If after the budget demands had been passed the Leader of the Opposition wants to make a statement I will allow that. (Cries from the Opposition : No, no, not after but now).

Dr. *Sanyal* : It is our privilege, we will not waive that.

The Speaker : Dr. Sanyal, I call upon you to move your motion.

Mr. *Kiran Sankar Roy* : May I make a submission. I know—we on this side of the House all know—that Government by the foot work of its followers can pass this budget. They have got votes on their sides. But I feel, as I pointed out yesterday, that in view of the unsatisfactory character of the statement, it is no use our taking part in the debate on the budget grants. As a matter of fact if statements, ordinances and promises could have supplied food, then people would have died of overfeeding rather than starvation. I and the party which I have the honour to lead will take no part in the proceedings of to-day. It is a shameful mockery for us to waste our time in continuing the debate."

The Speaker : I do not quite understand why this insistence that this statement should come first and then budget. That is baffling me. I have heard a whisper that after the budget demands are passed members of the Government Party will disappear. That apprehension, I believe, may not be quite correct. I will appeal to you to see that this matter is gone through and then there will be ample opportunities for the Opposition to make a statement.

Dr. *Syamaprasad Mookerjee* said that the Speaker had allowed Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy to make a statement because it had something to do with the exceptional circumstance now prevailing; but that statement was considered by the Opposition to be "utterly unsatisfactory." "The constitutional point that we raise is that the Minister having made a statement it is the privilege of the Leader of the Opposition to put any questions or to make a statement as he may consider necessary. It is not a question of favour that we ask from the House or yourself. This is a valued right of the Leader of the Opposition. We want the Hon. Minister to be here; we demand of him to listen to the point of view of the Opposition to be voiced through the Leader of the Opposition and if necessary the Minister to come up before the House and make a supplementary statement. There may be some technical difficulties but the situation in the province to-day is so very serious that we feel that we should not add to the present atmosphere of unreality by continuing the budget discussion on the general administration; we should have replies from Government giving an assurance with regard to supplies and distribution of food grains particularly to the dying millions of Bengal who are not in this fortunate city of Calcutta.

The Speaker : It is better that I should abdicate my position and go out of the office altogether rather than to allow such disorderly conduct in the House. (Hear, hear from the European Benches). I would insist on every member of

this House to help me in maintaining the order of the House. It may be that my ruling is absolutely wrong. It may be that I have not given proper facilities to the Opposition which they under the rules or by conventions, are entitled to. But I think that if any democratic institution is to function I am entitled to the support and co-operation of every honourable member of the House (Hear, hear from the European Benches) as otherwise it will be simply impossible to carry on the administration. It has been said that my conduct is schoolmasterly. Well, I have been in this House for a pretty long time, and I know that sometimes the conduct of the Speaker has got to be schoolmasterly. If there are boys and students, if there are pupils like honourable members who behave like naughty boys I have got to be schoolmasterly. It is far from me to be harsh to any member. I know the dignity of the members of the House and my dignity is the dignity of the House. If the members of the House are forgetful of that position, I think it is better for the Speaker to leave the Chair. I want to know if the Opposition is prepared to support me in this House.

Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq : I am extremely sorry to find that you have lost your temper. You are one of those men about whom I have the highest regard and whom nothing can ruffle his temper. Now you have said your dignity is our dignity. Your dignity is the dignity of the House but permit me to point out that my dignity is the dignity of the people of Bengal (Applauses from the Opposition Benches).

"I ask you not in a spirit of temper, to bring back to your mind the scene that was enacted by Hon. Mr. Suhrawardy. He made a statement good, bad or indifferent that is a different matter. But immediately after he made the statement, he put something into his mouth, turned his back and went out. I consider that to be an act of discourtesy to the House and to the Opposition and we took it very much to our hearts that such a thing could happen. You realise that it is not a question of the budget demands. I may tell you that we look upon this budget as the most dishonest budget. We do not care two brass buttons whether this budget is passed or not. The Budget will be passed. People will die in millions but this House will pass the budget. It is not a parliamentary procedure but a colossal humbug. We have nothing to do with it. We are most anxious about the food problem. There is the District Magistrate sitting in the gallery. Let him come out and say whether he is getting foodgrains for the people. It is not a question of passing the budget. If you would have allowed us to speak, we would have economised time and after having concentrated on one or two motions we would have passed the budget without division. Even now we are willing to pass the budget without division if the Government give us an undertaking that it would procure and give food to the starving millions of Bengal (Hear. Hear from the Opposition benches). Mere words and mere promises would not do. The Minister had said that the District Magistrates have been given instructions to unearth the foodgrains and I find that the District Magistrate of a very important district sitting in the gallery, let him say if he can really find food, let him come out and make a statement.

The Speaker : Order, Order. It is not in order to refer to the gallery.

Mr. Huq : So far as we are concerned we submit that we do not want to take any part in this discussion of the budget.

The Opposition members then withdrew from the House led by Mr. Huq.

The House was then adjourned for 20 minutes, and when the House re-assembled the Speaker regretted the absence of the Opposition and after calling out the members in whose names the cut motions stood which were not moved, put the original demand of Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 1,30,83,000 be granted for expenditure under the head—General Administration. The House sanctioned the demand, and passed the grant.

FOOD CRISIS—CHARGES AGAINST ISPAHANIS

23rd. SEPTEMBER :—Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal moved a cut motion to-day and spoke on the "impropriety and abuses in the appointment of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani Ltd. as the sole Agent of the Bengal Government for the purchase of foodgrains for some time and the payment of large sums of money to that firm without proper scrutiny of their purchases and deliveries and the prices." Dr. Sanyal said that he had no quarrels with the Ispahanis. He alleged that at the time when Ispahanis were appointed the purchasing agent, no contract was made, and an agreement was drawn up only a week ago. In the absence of any agreement, crores of rupees were given to the firm by violating the canons of public finances, and the total amount of such advances was nearly 5 crores. Dr. Sanyal could discover

that less than 3 crores worth of foodgrains had been delivered to the Government agents.—Messrs. Mirza Ali Akbar. About 2 crores worth of rice was purchased in Bengal itself and only 3 crores worth of foodgrains from other provinces. It is not understood why the Bengal Government allowed the prices of rice to be forced up by such purchases. When prices had a tendency to go down Ispahanis purchased rice at any price and thus again forced it up. Dr. Sanyal had reports from a responsible officer of Government who went to Bihar to facilitate the transport of rice purchased by the Ispahanis that he discovered that the Ispahanis were selling rice to the Bengal Government at a price much higher than their cost price. Certain steps were taken by the C. P. Government because the merchants there alleged that huge profits were being made by purchasing the rice at a lower price from them and selling the rice at higher price in Bengal. Dr. Sanyal also alleged that during the last food drive the godowns of a certain agent were left out of inspection by ordinary officers, and special officers were appointed to take the stocks. Even then one of the special officers who conducted the stock taking complained that the stock were much larger than what were declared by Mirza Ali Akbar. Dr. Sanyal added that that officer was an I. C. S. officer who brought the matter to the notice of the police and the later sealed the godowns. Then again peremptory orders were issued under instruction from "H. M." prohibiting the stock taking by that officer.

Mr. *Suhrawardy*: I know nothing about it.

Mr. *Abdul Rahman Siddiqi* replied that the allegations against the Ispahanis were baseless, and malicious, and contradicted every piece of allegation made by Dr. Sanyal. Mr. Siddiqi said that it was because the Ispahanis were Moslems that such allegations had been made. Every other provincial Government had appointed sole agents, and they were a commercial firm of great repute and there was no necessity for them to make money in the way complained about. Mr. Siddiqi also pointed out that the agents of Ispahanis were not singled out by the C. P. Government for stopping export of rice purchased on behalf of their respective Governments, but all other agents were also served with similar orders.

Dr. *Santosh Kumar Basu* said that he was speaking in the debate because it had been said over and over again that the old Ministry were responsible for the present situation. But they would find that there was a trio in the politics of Bengal: they were Suhrawardy, Ispahani and Siddiqi. Suhrawardy and Ispahani had been always in the forefront and Siddiqi forming the tailhead. Mr. Basu said that he would like to state the reasons why he did not resign previously. It was his (Mr. Basu's) party which asked him not to resign. Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain, who was now adorning the Treasury Bench, wrote to Mr. Basu from Behrampore on 28th November, 1942, to the following effect: Bengal will never forgive you if you resign now. Bengal will never forgive you if you come out and hand her over to the Suhrawardy gang." People, Mr. Basu added, might change their opinion when they joined the ranks of "gangsters" themselves.

Dr. *Shyamprasad Mukherjee* said that charges against the firm had been openly made and there should be an enquiry into it. The other day he enquired of the Ministry to give certain informations and although five days has passed those informations were still not before the House. For the reputation of the Government and also of the firm there should be an open enquiry by a tribunal which might command the confidence of the people of the province. They had received reports from all parts of Bengal, from Hindus and Muslims, stating that their families were starving and no rice was available. The question of questions was how could the Price Control Order be promulgated without making adequate and proper arrangements for supply. That was the specific charge against the Government of Bengal. For this alone the Government of Bengal had forfeited the confidence of the people. Proceeding, Dr. Mukherjee enquired of what was going to be done in respect of the Aman crop (voice: Agents were already making advances). If the Government had no scheme of organisation before December, if they were not going to set up an organisation now, then the whole of the province would be thrown to really bottomless pit.

Mr. *L. G. Kennedy* said that the painful history of food control in Bengal was the story of a handful of men struggling hopelessly with an immense problem. It might be said truthfully that food control had been toyed with and not tackled in the large scale manner which it needed. This was a hopeless state of affairs and could not be allowed to continue.

Hon. *Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin*, replying to the debate, said that the last speaker (Dr. Shyamprasad Mookherjee) had given a clue to the real propaganda

that was being carried on in the province by the Opposition. (Cries of No, No from the opposition benches). (A voice from the opposition benches: what are you doing to prevent death and starvation?).

Sir Nazimuddin said that the firm of Ispahanis were being ground down merely because that was a means of attack on the Government itself. The real object was to utilise the situation for the purpose of attacking the Government. Ispahanis were the handy target for an attack on the Government of Bengal. He took full responsibility also for the appointment of Ispahanis as the sole agent of the Government of Bengal. That was done after consultation with the Regional Commissioner and His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. He could not say—let the members deny if they could—that the propaganda had been so successful that even the highest in the land had been subjected to it.

Dr. Sanyal: Who is the highest in the land?

Sir Nazimuddin: And the whole thing can be seen by this that even it had been said that the whole illness of the Governor of Bengal was not correct. Could that be denied? Could it be denied that all this was propaganda?

Dr. Mookherjee said that the Hon. Chief Minister had stated that there had been insinuations that the highest in the land, His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, was somehow implicated in connection with the contract being given to Ispahanis and he had also stated that it was rumoured that Sir John Herbert had faked illness. Up till now such reports had not appeared in newspapers. Would this statement of the Hon. Chief Minister be allowed to be published in the newspapers?

The Speaker replied "Why not?"

Sir Nazimuddin remarked that when he said "propaganda", he meant "propaganda".

Dr. Mookherjee: Even the death of people is propaganda?

Sir Nazimuddin continued that they realised at the time of appointing Ispahanis that various allegations would be levelled against the Ministry, but the Ministry were advised by responsible persons that if they wanted rice to come into Bengal the responsibility must be taken. It should be remembered in this connexion that at that time there was stock of rice which was sufficient only for two days for Calcutta. Sir Nazimuddin said that at that time the Bengal Government was prepared to purchase rice at any price, and if the Ispahanis had any desire to make profits they could have easily earned Rs. 35 lakhs by selling rice to the Bengal Government at Rs. 30 or more which was the market price then.

Moreover, Sir Nazimuddin continued, not a single instance had been cited by the Opposition where Ispahanis had purchased rice at a lower price and sold it to Government at a higher price.

Dr. Sanyal: Bihar.

Sir Nazimuddin retorted that times and times again offers had been made to inspect the books of accounts of Ispahanis. But they could not do that.

The Home Minister referred to the price control orders and said that instead of trying to co-operate with the Government in seeing that control was rigidly followed, in seeing that controlled price was maintained in the markets, the Opposition had taken up an attitude which encouraged the traders to hold on their stocks. (Shouts of protests from the Opposition were heard). Dwelling on the criticism that it was not proper to enforce control order without ensuring supplies, Sir Nazimuddin said that if there was supply, the question of controlling prices would not have arisen; the normal economic law of supply and demand would have functioned. Because there was deficit, there was the need for controlling prices.

"We knew", Sir Nazimuddin continued, "that we were taking a grave risk by trying to control price of rice. We knew that there was likelihood of rice disappearing from the market. By the Grace of God, however, we have not had the thing which might have happened". (Cries of oh, oh, from the Opposition).

Actually, the Chief Minister said, Dr. Mookerjee had read out letters from 8 or 9 districts.....

Dr. Mookerjee: Here is the file. I can read out the rest if you like to hear.

Sir Nazimuddin: But in the rest of Bengal, in the major part of Bengal rice is being sold at controlled price though not in the quantities you wished to have; but 5 seers, 2 seers or 1 seer you can get.....

Voices from the Opposition: We do not want to listen. It is no use to waste time in hearing such a speech.

Sir Nazimuddin: You can go to Calcutta, Howrah, Bogra.....(Shouts from the Opposition drowned his voice).

Sir Nazimuddin : I am naming the districts where you can get it.....

Dr. Sanyal : There is no use for his speech. Let the question be put to vote.

Sir Nazimuddin : Every possible step is being taken and Government are doing everything humanly possible to meet the situation.

The cut motion of Dr. Sanyal was then put to vote and lost by 116 to 78 votes. The other cut motions were also lost, and the main grant was passed. The House then adjourned.

CONDUCT OF CHIEF JUSTICE CRITICISED

24th. SEPTEMBER :—Hon. Mr. Barada Prosanna Pain moved that a sum of Rs. 48,13,000 be granted for expenditure under the head—Irrigation. Mr. *Adwaitya Kumar Maji* by a cut motion discussed the failure of the Government to maintain the Damodar Embankment. Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal* by a cut motion discussed the failure of the Government to prevent the havoc created through the recent flood of the Damodar. Mr. *Pramatha Nath Banerjee* by a cut motion raised a discussion about the policy underlying the demand and the failure of the Government to formulate or execute well-considered policy. Replying to the debate, the Minister said that the natural calamity like flood in the Damodar was not preventable. The Committee appointed had been specifically requested to submit their report covering all the points suggested by the speakers. The latest report that he had received was to the effect that the river was showing the tendency to flow through the old course and the breach was closing. Defending the policy of the present Government Mr. Pain said that as the war progressed, they would require more agricultural produce and necessarily there was the need for more cultivation and more irrigation schemes being put into operation. It was mostly earth work that was required to be done. They had the sympathy of the India Government and expected substantial grant from the Central Government. The Government of India had also promised to release the provincial officers to put the schemes into operation. The cut motions were put to vote and lost without division. The original motion was then carried by the House.

The House also sanctioned the sum of Rs. 1,06,16,000 demanded by Mr. Pain for expenditure under the head—civil works, a sum of Rs. 17,83,000 demanded by Mr. *Sahabuddin* for expenditure under the head—Industries ; and a sum of Rs. 12,25,000 demanded by Mr. *Premhari Barma* under the head—Industries (Cinchona).

The demand for grant of Rs. 75,12,000 under head "Administration of Justice" moved by the Hon. *Nawab Musharuff Hossain* was passed. Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal* sought to move a cut motion to raise a discussion about "the conduct of Sir *Harold Derbyshire* who holds the office of the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in so far as he indulged in certain observations regarding Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, the ex-premier and Mr. *Syed Badruddoja*, the Mayor of Calcutta, not at all required in the discharge of his duties. Dr. Sanyal contended that the Government of India Act clearly contemplated criticisms by the public and also by the legislature of even the conduct of a person occupying the highest position in the judiciary in the land if that person did something which did not seemingly and apparently come within the function and duty of his office. The wording of section 86 of the Government of India Act prohibited discussion in the legislature on the conduct in the discharge of his duties of any judge of a High Court or the Federal Court. The question therefore which arose in determining whether his cut motion was in order or not was a question of fact, namely, whether in this particular case the observations made by the Judge concerned really arose in course of the discharge of his judicial duty. This question had to be approached from different angles. The ordinary citizens outside, the public and the Press had the right to criticise and examine judgments delivered by courts. So long as the cases remained sub-judice they could not discuss them because that would be infringing the rules and laws regarding contempt of court. But after judgments were delivered, the public had the right to criticise them. It was never contemplated that the members would have privileges much less than possessed by the public outside.

The Speaker, Mr. *Nausher Ali* in giving his ruling said : "The motion seeks to discuss the conduct of Sir *Harold Derbyshire* who holds the office of Chief Justice. Therefore, his conduct is the conduct of the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court in so far as he indulged—I must stress upon the word 'indulge'—in certain observations regarding Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq and so on. But Dr. Sanyal contends that this conduct of Sir *Harold Derbyshire* was out of the mischief of section 16 ; and he wanted to prove that it was not necessary in the discharge of

his duties as the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. I am sorry I cannot allow a motion of this nature. Because, if I allow it, the result would be that every member will come forward and say that this part of a particular judgment was not necessary in the discharge of his duty as a judge. I regret that such an interpretation is not permissible under section 86 of the Act, and therefore I regretfully disallow the second part of this motion." The Speaker however added that it was open, in his opinion, to every member of this House to discuss judgments once pronounced, the merits, the procedure having relation to that judgment except casting reflection upon any judge.

MR. POLLARD'S CASE

Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal then moved a cut motion to discuss the situation created "through the setting aside of the conviction of Mr. R. C. Pollard, Superintendent of Police, Murshidabad, on a charge of assaulting one lawyer at Berhampore and through the issuing of orders for the re-trial of the accused in what is known as the Jiaganj rice-looting case." Dr. Sanyal alleged that the entire public opinion in the district was against this officer. This officer, he alleged, did what he liked, and did not care even the district magistrates or sub-divisional officers. The situation had deteriorated so much that every decent man in the district was under constant fear.

Mr. Atul Chandra Sen moved another cut motion to raise "a discussion about the recent pronouncement by Sir Charles Harold Derbyshire, Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court, about Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Chief Minister, Bengal, in connection with what is known as the Jiaganj Rice-Looting Case." Mr. Sen said that the observations made by the Chief Justice were uncalled for. The offence of Mr. Fazlul Huq was that he wrote certain letters to the district magistrate in which he asked the trial magistrate not to be influenced by the brow-beating of the police. Mr. Huq was not on trial; he had no opportunity to defend himself. Yet the strictures were passed against him. Mr. Syed Badruddoja said that Mr. Huq wrote those letters since Mr. Huq had information in his possession from reliable quarters that attempts were being made "to pile up evidence." Instead of trying to interfere with the administration of justice, Mr. Huq tried to maintain the flow of justice. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi said that there was nothing wrong in Mr. Huq's writing letters to the district magistrate. But that must be done in his capacity as the Chief Minister and not in his personal capacity as he had done in the present circumstances. That was a bad administration and give rise to suspicion. Hon. Nawab Musharuff Hossain said that he did not find what fault could be found with the High Court judgment. The judgment simply said that if the officer had committed an offence he must be prosecuted after sanction had been obtained from the Government of Bengal. The cut motions when put to vote, were all lost and the entire grant was passed.

ALLEGATIONS OF HIGHER PRICES OF FOODSTUFFS

25th. SEPTEMBER:—Hon. Mr. Tamizuddin Khan, Minister for Education, moved for a sum of Rs. 1,67,56,000 for grant under head "Education—General."

Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri moved a cut motion to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to provide for sufficient aid to non-Government Secondary Schools to enable them to grant dearness allowance to their teachers. Mr. Rai Choudhury pointed out the very distressing situation in which the teachers of the province were placed owing to the high price of rice and other commodities. The last Ministry of Mr. Huq did something to give them relief, and spent about a lakh and 75 thousand for alleviating their distress. But there was no provision in the present budget to that purpose.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee urged Government to go to the aid of the teacher in non-Government institutions of the province. Reports were coming to him about the miserable plight of teachers which were indeed heart-rending. He feared that unless some immediate arrangements were made, the teachers as a class would go into oblivion and with them would also go into oblivion the entire educational system of the province. A principle was adopted by the last Minister to give some temporary relief to the teachers in non-Government schools and colleges. At least Government could give these teachers a lump sum in aid. It might be that a few lakhs more would be spent; but when Bengal could afford to have a deficit budget to the extent of 7-1/2 crores, this sum could easily be provided. Dr. Mookerjee also pointed out the extreme difficulty the students residing in hostels were experiencing in getting rice. It was absolutely necessary, Dr. Mookerjee said, that Government arranged to supply rice to these hostels.

Mr. W. C. Wordsworth wholeheartedly associated with the suggestions made by the previous speakers. He did not blame the present Government or any other Government for the distressing condition of the teachers; for, that was due to the fault of every Government of this province. Teachers were never fairly paid. Perhaps, it was considered that because they were doing valuable public work it would be improper to consider their case.

Mr. P. Bannerji also moved a cut motion about Government's failure to provide for adequate relief to the teachers of non-Government institutions. Mr. Radha Nath Das by a cut motion attacked Government for the lack of any policy to educate the people belonging to the scheduled castes of Bengal. He pointed out that although there were three Ministers and a few parliamentary secretaries there was nothing in the budget which showed that they were going to improve the condition of education among the scheduled castes. Maulvi Idris Ahmed Mia also moved a cut motion for the failure of Government to introduce Primary Education Act in Malda which was most backward educationally in Bengal.

Replying, Mr. Tamizuddin Khan said that it was admitted that the condition of teachers was very serious. He formed a comprehensive scheme to give relief to teachers. He placed his scheme before the 'Government as a whole' with the hope that something should be done for these tottering institutions and starving teachers. "It was found," he said, "that it was not possible to do anything for this deserving people. I think it will be admitted that the question of saving the general mass of people from starvation is far more important than that of helping these distressed teachers. Therefore, whatever money was available, it was decided, must be spent towards the general relief of the starving people. The only part of my scheme that was accepted was to give dearness allowance to teachers of primary schools under district school boards." Dealing further with this question the Minister said that Government had controlled the price of rice and Government expected that price would come down soon. That would be giving relief not only to the teachers but to the people as a whole. "The situation", he said, "has improved to a very great extent, and even teachers are getting rice at much lower price than they previously used to get. In Faridpur rationing has been introduced, and teachers of secondary and primary schools are getting rice at controlled price from Government shops."

The cut motion of Mr. Rai Chaudhury was put to vote and lost by 110 to 73 votes. The other cut motions were also lost, and the grant was passed.

Hon. Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hossain moved that a sum of Rs. 1,33,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Agriculture."

Mr. G. Morgan moved a cut motion to draw the attention of Government to the dangerous seed position not only for the coming winter season but the position which was looming in front of them as regards the 1944 Aus and Aman paddy crops. To give a specific instance of the present hopeless situation, he cited an instance which occurred at Rajshahi. An application was made to the district agricultural officer at Bilmaria who replied that he had been unable to buy any 'chaitali' seeds. The agricultural officer at Berhampore said that they had no seeds for disposal. This means that large areas would remain fallow or at best be sown with inferior seed. The same lack of foresight affected Bhadol sowing when cultivators in Murshidabad were obliged to sow vast areas of good paddy land with inferior crops. If this is happening in Rajshahi, Nadia and Murshidabad, it surely must be happening in other districts in Bengal. If the 1943 crops showed no surplus and people all over Bengal were starving, then how could the Government expect to get the paddy and other seeds sufficient to sow over 26 million acres next year? And if the quantity required,—150 lakhs of maunds of paddy,—was not procurable from the 1943 crops at harvest time, how would the province fare as regards the 1944 'aus' and 'aman' paddy and foodgrains sowings? "Are we faced with complete starvation a year hence?", said Mr. Morgan. He urged Government to purchase aus paddy seed now for next season's sowings, and advertise the price they would give for really sound seed.

Replying, the Minister said that Government could not be expected to supply seed for the whole of Bengal. This would mean an expenditure which Government could not undertake. Government were supplying seeds in the areas where they were absolutely required. He had taken up the reorganisation of the Agriculture Department. The pressure on land was very heavy, and the number of landless labourers was also increasing. Government was under correspondence with the appropriate authority for the promulgation of an Ordinance whereby all lands which would not be cultivated by the landlords would be cultivated by the Government,

Mr. Morgan wanted to withdraw his cut motion. Leave was however given by the House by a majority of 110 to 75 for withdrawal of the cut motion. The remaining 47 items of budget were then placed before the House without discussion since time was up, and were passed. The House then adjourned till the 27th.

DEBATE ON THE FOOD SITUATION

27th. SEPTEMBER :—The adjourned debate on the food situation commenced to-day. Dr. *Nalinaksha Sanyal's* resolution characterised the statement of the Food Minister as extremely disappointing and unsatisfactory, particularly in so far as it did not envisage Government intention to undertake as yet the maintenance of food supply for the entire population, especially the rural population and the middle class, and in so far as there was the absence of any comprehensive scheme for equitable distribution. Dr. Sanyal urged that big centres like Calcutta and suburbs, places of military quarters or aerodrome construction etc. should be isolated from the rest of Bengal with arrangements for food supply to such areas from outside Bengal, and leaving the rural areas with the crop for their consumption. He also urged the abandonment of the scheme of 'aman' paddy and rice by outsiders in various districts, and passed for an immediate reorganisation of the village food committees and setting up of union and village relief committees representatives of all sections and organizations.

Mr. *J. R. Walker* said that the position was bad enough in Calcutta but they had reason to believe that the position was even worse in areas outside Calcutta, for example, in certain areas in East Bengal and in the Contai and Tamluk subdivisions of Midnapur. Figures of mortality from starvation in Calcutta had been published but there were no complete official figures regarding deaths in other areas. That should be done in order that the facts might be known. They felt strongly on the point that the Government had not collected the destitutes in Calcutta and removed them to camps prior to repatriating them to their own villages. They demanded that Government took vigorous action immediately in removing the destitutes. He contradicted the suggestion in Delhi circles that the situation had been over-dramatised. He held the view that the Government of India must assume the responsibility for seeing that there was an equitable distribution of rice and other foodgrains as between the provinces. They should like to be assured that food supplies as they came to Bengal were supplied speedily to mofussil places. In normal circumstances they would have agreed but it was certainly not desirable that one firm should be appointed as the sole Government agents, and they trusted that Government had that point in view in regard to their 'aman' crop policy. The criticism against the firm of Ispahanis he considered to be unfair and was inspired by political motives.

Mr. *Mukunda Behari Mullick* said that the food situation was undoubtedly a serious one and for its solution determined action was urgently required. There was hardly any room to raise any acrimonious discussion over the unfortunate situations. Everybody had to admit that the present Ministry were trying their very best to meet the situation.

Dr. *Sanaulla* said that although he had moved from pillar to post and from post to pillar he had not yet been able to secure rice for relief purpose in Chittagong where at the present moment rice was not available. The present Ministry were supposed to be hankering for the co-operation of the Opposition but when the speaker approached the Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmad he was politely told that he could not agree to be associated with their non-official relief work.

Mr. *Anandilal Poddar* maintained that Mr. Subrawardy could not explain away the gap in the Punjab price of Atta at Rs. 10-8 and the Bengal price at Rs. 17-8 and wondered why the exorbitant milling charge at the rate of Rs. 3 per maund was allowed.

Mr. *Samsuddin Ahmad* did not know on whose advice the district of Nadia had been declared a surplus district. He enquired of the agriculturists of his constituency as to why they were selling their stocks of rice when they knew that they could not be in a position to meet their own family demands. They in reply told him that they sold their stocks as otherwise they were apprehensive that the Government would seize their stocks and confiscate the same. That was the type of propaganda that was being adopted to make the peasants part with stocks that were required for their family consumption.

Mr. *A. K. Fazlul Huq*, leader of the Opposition, said that it was no use putting forward charges and counter-statements. Let them take their stand on solid facts. Bengal was in the grip of famine; not only there was scarcity, but

rice had totally disappeared from the province. A member had alleged that rice was sold at Dacca at Rs. 80/- per maund. But Mr. Huq was of the opinion that that question did not arise, since rice was unavailable the cost of it did not matter. That was the position in Bengal to-day. Was that the legacy his Government left for the present Ministry? Mr. Huq's Government left office towards the end of March 1943 when rice was selling between 15 and 20/- per maund. The present Ministry took office on April 24. As soon as Mr. Suhrawardy took charge, he went into the files and made all sorts of enquiries. After having carefully surveyed the food position in the province, Mr. Suhrawardy issued statements asserting that there was no shortage of rice, and the price prevailing at that time was purely speculative and bore no relation whatsoever to the true stock position in the province as a whole. According to Mr. Suhrawardy's own admission, there had been bumper 'boro' crop, there was last year's carry over, and the Government of India were sending foodgrains which would meet Bengal's needs to the full. (Cries from the Opposition benches: Ganja, ganja). By a dispassionate reading of the statements issued by the Minister for Civil Supplies, Mr. Huq continued, it would be evident that he came to the conclusion that there was no shortage but that there was difficulty in the distribution. Not a single word was then said about the "tremendous deficiency" left to him (Mr. Suhrawardy) by his predecessor. When Mr. Huq was in office, Mr. Walker condemned his Government for the high price of rice which was only Rs. 15 to 20. What now was their stand when the price went up to Rs. 80 - in Dacca?

There was an interruption from Mr. *Abdur Rahman Siddiqi* which could not be heard from the press box.

Mr. *Huq* was heard saying: You take all the money from Bengal, but let me allow to say a few words.

There was a system of Hindu philosophy, which perhaps was not known to the European members of the House, according to which everything in this world was nothing but illusion (Maya). "You see a picture before you; but you cannot say it is a picture, it may be a rope or something else—it is purely illusion. So, there is no rice in Bengal; but that is not correct, rice is there but it is illusion. The price is Rs. 80/- per maund; that is nothing—why don't you take it to be Rs. 4/-, for everything is illusion! The famine is purely speculative. What nonsense? People are dying—that is also illusion—for the people are not dying, but they are reborn." According to non-officials people were dying of starvation: no, that was not correct, for according to Government people were dying not because of starvation, but because of exposure and cold. "I say all this is propaganda," the Minister exclaims, "there is no distress in the country." The position, therefore, was, Mr. Huq continued, so far as the scarcity was concerned, it was not the legacy of the past Government. As regards high price of rice, that was also not the legacy left by the previous Ministry.

It had been said that the firm of Ispahanis had done a great service to the country by undertaking the sole purchasing agency of the Government of Bengal. Mr. Huq knew the circumstances under which the firm was given the task. When the denial policy was decided upon, the Governor of Bengal, Sir John Herbert asked the Joint Secretary to arrange for the removal of rice from coastal areas. The Joint Secretary to the Commerce Department made certain telephonic enquiries from four or five firms asking them if they could undertake the job. He then reported to Sir John that no firm was agreeable to undertake the task, and then it was stated there was no other firm with agencies all over Bengal who was willing to remove the surplus rice from the coastal districts. In the circumstances, Mr. Huq was told, there was no other alternative but to give the job to the Ispahanis. Mr. Huq said that his Ministry was not asked in the matter, subsequently they lodged strong protests against it. Mr. Huq's objection was not to the appointment of the firm of the Ispahanis. His objection was to the manner in which the agents of Ispahanis had been allowed to go about in the mofussil disturbing the economic condition of the people, purchasing rice and creating panic. "We demand," Mr. Huq said, "a thorough public inquiry." Mr. Huq went to Khulna and was told that the agents with permits of Government were telling the people that they could not sell rice to anybody but to them. They purchased rice at Rs. 3/- or 4/- per maund and sold it to Government account at Rs. 30/- per maund. He had also received such stories from other places. Mr. Huq also alleged that rice was requisitioned, but no compensation was paid for the requisitioned rice. Was that justice, was this the way to protect the rights and liberty of the people? Was it not criminal? The European group professed that they supported the Ministry

because it was honestly attempting to solve the problem. If they were sincere in their profession, the European group should support the demand of the Opposition for an inquiry into these allegations. If there was an inquiry, Mr. Huq declared, the European group would find what dirty things had been and were being done in the name of justice? What, after all, was wrong in an enquiry? It was admitted that crores of rupees had been given to the Ispahanis. This was public money, and public had the right to know how the money had been spent. All public organizations, even organizations for relief work, published their accounts to satisfy the people. The Ispahanis had been given money out of public Exchequer, and various allegations had been made against the firm. In the circumstances, why they fear an inquiry—for, an inquiry would give them the opportunity to clear the firm of the charges levelled against it. Mr. Suhrawardy had issued an appeal for co-operation. "It must be understood," Mr. Huq said, "that confidence breathes confidence, and co-operation breathes co-operation. A Government which is not merely a sectional Government but which carries on its Government only to favour a few of their friends and relations do not deserve any co-operation." Mr. Huq alleged that even some members of the Opposition were approached by Government party with offers to induce them to go over to the Ministerialist party. That was the kind of Government they had in Bengal to-day. "I hope my friends of the European Group," Mr. Huq concluded, "will excuse me if I refer in this connexion to the fact that this Ministry which during the past six months has been able to bring the province to such a pass is getting unstinted support not merely from my friends opposite but from the European group: for the support given to this Ministry by the European group and my friends opposite come from the same psychological source, although the approaches may be slightly different. The European group supports this Ministry because it was their foundling, and they know that this ministry is so very amenable to their advice that they would be ill-advised to throw this Ministry out of office. They are acting under the apprehension that once the Ministry goes out of office it is not known what catastrophe may befall them. The position of my friends of the European group was that it is better to have the devil we know than the devil we do not know. My friends opposite (referring to the Ministerial party) are supporting this Ministry, because they have placed all their hopes for future in this Ministry; it is through this Ministry that they have amassed fabulous wealth which will last for generations to come."

Hon. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, replying to the debate, said that he refused to be agitated by the taunts of members of the Opposition from whom not a single constructive suggestion had come. Dr. Shyamaprosad Mookerjee's speech was political stunt.

Dr. Mookerjee : Give the people food and stop this stunt.

It did not matter what he said formerly, said Mr. Suhrawardy. What mattered really was that on the assumption of office he took all possible steps to persuade the Government that there was shortage of rice in Bengal and that they must come to the assistance of the province. It had been stated that no adequate steps had been taken to send supplies to the deficit areas. But the real fact was that for five months these deficit areas were being supplied by the Government. He made it quite clear that no rice was taken away from deficit areas. As soon as he heard that the situation in Midnapur had deteriorated he had sanctioned to double the amount of rice that was being sent to that place.

Replying to the second charge of Dr. Mookerjee, Mr. Suhrawardy said that he had lodged protests that the quota allotted to Bengal must not be reduced. As regards the controversy regarding the Punjab wheat, he could say that he had explained the whole position to the satisfaction of both the Government of India and of the Punjab (Voice : They had refused to be convinced).

Mr. Suhrawardy : No. The Punjab Government is now convinced. The Sardar Saheb himself had stated that he was now convinced that the Government of Bengal were not profiteering. The position was that at the very start some profit was made. It was due to the fact that a considerable amount of wheat and wheat product was promised to them. They had to make arrangements for handling charges. But subsequently they did not get the promised quantity. He was also prepared to admit that they were inexperienced in handling the same. (A voice : After the Punjab Government had disclosed the whole affair).

From his return he was determined to bring down the price of wheat and its present price was annas seven per seer. A political capital was sought to be made of the fact that the firm of Ispahanis had been made the sole agent of the Government. The whole thing had been fully explained by the Chief Minister to the

House. Dr. Mookherjee wanted him to state the total advances made to the firm. He could say in reply that no advance had been made to the firm; and whatever amount had been paid had been paid after the purchase had been made and vouchers submitted. (Voice: This is not true).

Mr. Suhrawardy: That is absolutely correct. No money is paid to the firm unless vouchers are submitted. Proceeding, Mr. Suhrawardy said that in all four and half crores of rupees to five crores of rupees had been paid to the firm. He could not say the exact figure. It appeared to him that Dr. Sanyal and Dr. Mookherjee knew everything about his department and they therefore knew what was the position. (Voice: Not a clear answer)

Mr. Suhrawardy: I am however of the opinion that Bengal stands indebted to the firm of Ispahanis (Cries of "Oh", "Oh" from the Opposition benches). As regards the agreement entered into between the Government and the firm, Mr. Suhrawardy could have no objection to the members inspecting the same. He had already stated to the House that the whole figures could not be placed before the House but there was no reason why his offer previously made and which could be repeated again that members were welcome to go to the office of the firm and inspect the same. He besought that this offer should be accepted and this controversy should be stopped once and for all. He on behalf of the Government was anxious that if there was anything wrong it should be brought to the notice of the Government. Proceeding Mr. Suhrawardy said that there was no political connection between the firm and the Ministry (cries of Oh, Oh, from the Opposition benches). Mr. Suhrawardy stated that Mr. Mookherjee sent telegrams to the unsuspecting district and sub-divisional officers as to whether any relief centres ought to be opened there and they, anxious to get what the Government were doing supplemented, replied that there was the necessity for opening such centres. That did not mean that there was no supply available. The House would readily realise the position that at the present moment about 4000 kitchens had been opened in the province (Voice: On paper only). He was prepared to admit that Dr. Sanyal and Dr. Mookherjee could not appreciate the efforts of the Government, anxious as they were to make a political capital out of the food situation. But he could assure them that even if his bitterest enemy would come to relieve the distress of the people of Bengal he would be prepared to give him all help. Concluding, Mr. Suhrawardy said that Mr. Mookherjee had spoken of co-operation. They of the Ministry were anxious to accept that co-operation. Let them come with clean hands.

Dr. Mookherjee: As if you are talking with the murderers.

Mr. Suhrawardy: Come and let us sit together to solve the problem of Bengal. Come with the desire to serve the people and not with any other idea.

The resolution of Dr. Nalinakshya Sanyal was then put to vote and lost, 88 voting for it and 128 against. The resolutions of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookherjee and Mr. Surendra N. Biswas were lost without any division. The House then adjourned.

NON-OFFICIAL BILLS

28th. SEPTEMBER:—After the announcement was made by the Hon. Mr. T. C. Goswami, Finance Minister that the budget had been authenticated by His Excellency Sir Thomas Rutherford, Governor of Bengal, the House proceeded with the business of the day, namely, non-official members' Bills. The House quickly disposed of the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill, 1940 of Mr. Maqbul Hossain by refusing it to be sent to a Select Committee. The second Bill—the Bengal Rent Reduction Bill, 1941 of Mr. Amrita Lal Mandal was allowed to be circulated for the purpose of eliciting public opinion thereon. Similarly, Mr. J. N. Gupta's Benthall Housing Bill, 1942 was also allowed to be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion.

The House then allowed about ten members to introduce their Bills, namely, the Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1941, the Bengal Close Season of Fishes Bill, 1941, the Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1941, the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill 1941, the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education (Amendment) Bill, 1941, the Bengal Hindu Women's Rights to Agricultural Land Bill, 1941, the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1943, the Advocates Robes Bill, 1941, the Bengal Hindu Women's Rights to Agricultural Land Bill, 1941, the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill 1941, and the Bengal Money-Lenders (Amendment) Bill 1941.

The House was then prorogued.

The Punjab Legislative Assembly

Autumn Session—Lahore—1st, to 9th November 1943

MR. JALALUDDIN AMBER'S DEATH

The Punjab Legislative Assembly, which met at Lahore on the 1st. November 1943 for its autumn session, adjourned for the day as a mark of respect to the memory of *Chaudhri Jalal-ud-Din Amber* (Indian Christian), a member of the House, who passed away recently.

CONGRESS DETENUS AND SECURITY PRISONERS

2nd. NOVEMBER :—The Premier, Lt.-Col. *Malik Khizar Hyat Khan* made an important statement on the floor of the Assembly to-day regarding the policy of his Government in the matter of answers to be given to the questions regarding Congress detenues and the security prisoners. The premier announced a change in the practice followed heretofore and said that the Government would be prepared now to give as much information as possible on the floor of the House.

The statement which was made by the Premier before the question hour says: "In view of the large number of questions about what are termed political prisoners, I think it would be convenient if at this opening stage I make a general statement on the position. In the last session, following the policy of my predecessor, I declined to answer on the floor of the House questions relating to persons arrested in connection with the Congress movement of August 1942, but offered to supply information privately for the personal information of the member putting the question. The reason for this policy was that it was clear that the question hour was being employed, not as a genuine medium for eliciting information but as a method of sustaining and later reviving interest in the activities of an illegal organisation. That there was justification for this view is shown by the fact that I do not recollect any occasion on which advantage was taken of my offer to supply information privately. I think it is now possible to modify this attitude and I will endeavour to provide such information as is readily available in records at headquarter offices in Lahore but I am afraid I am not now able to undertake to get from district officers highly detailed information. It is not in the public interest to do this in the conditions created by the war. The amount of time, labour and correspondence which is involved in connecting and checking detailed information from district officers is not perhaps realised, but I think it is impossible to throw this extra heavy burden on the already over-worked officers or to justify the very considerable consumption of paper involved. This is the general rule, but if I am convinced that a question raised a matter of great importance, I will, of course, direct the collection of information.

RELEASES

"As a background to this change I will first of all give some figures. We are constantly reviewing cases of civil disobedience detenues, and more than half of the total number who were arrested since August 1942 have already been released. The most recent review was a general one of those detained under the orders of district officers and began last August and is now practically complete. Seventy-five persons have already been released as a result of this review and orders are under issue for the release of 8 others and few more may also be expected. The total number of civil disobedience detenues in jail on October 26, 1943, was 304. Of these about one-third are of more than local importance, and their release will be governed by the general all-India policy towards the Congress movement. In some cases of course it has been necessary to impose certain restrictions after release and the number of such orders in force is 96. Further reviews of the cases of these prisoners will take place later as the prevailing conditions permit in accordance with the all-India policy governing the attitude to this movement. Other persons detained as security prisoners by the Punjab Government for reasons not connected with the civil disobedience movement itself numbered 181 on October 26, 1943. Their cases are also reviewed from time to time, and in fact 23 have been released in the last three months as a result of examination by Government. The cases of those persons, who have been detained for more than one year, are reviewed by a Committee consisting of two non-officials, including one of the status of a Judge of the High Court, together with the Inspector General of Police. This Committee sat last year and over 50 persons were released as a result of its recommendations. The

Committee is about to sit again to examine further cases that are now ripe for consideration.

CONCESSION TO C. D. PRISONERS

"The conditions of detention of civil disobedience prisoners are also continually under review, and many modifications and concessions have been introduced from time to time. The diet allowance has been raised on two occasions and now stands at Rs. 1/4/- per head per day, and Superintendents of Jails are authorised to meet the wishes of detenus in the matter of diet as far as possible. I have also ordered that supplementation of diet up to Rs. 10/- per mensem may be permitted. As a result of recent orders the number of letters that may be written has been raised to two per week and the number to be received has been increased to four per week and a certain amount of correspondence on business matters is permitted. They have also been allowed to wear their own shoes and clothes and use their own bedding, and are supplied with various newspapers in English, Urdu and Gurmukhi. Apart from the use of the jail library which has always been at their disposal, and the keeping of religious books which has always been allowed, five books per month are now permitted to be sent in to each prisoner and the stipulation that such books should be first presented to the jail library has been withdrawn. Indoor games, cards and so forth are allowed. So far, except in special cases, interviews have not been permitted in accordance with the general policy of the Government of India with regard to their own prisoners. In the case of serious illness of detenus or their near relatives, release on parole have been permitted. Government are criticised in the press for not releasing more prisoners on parole and not making such release quicker, but each case has to be carefully considered and due enquiry has to be made, as I regret to say that many such applications appear to be based on a quite unwarranted pessimistic view of the alleged illnesses.

"I hope this statement will serve as a background to the many questions pending; as I have said, answers to particular questions will be given where the information is readily available provided, of course, it is not contrary to public interest, and I think this policy should satisfy hon'ble members who are genuinely seeking information."

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS RULED OUT

A number of adjournment motions of which notice had been given by *S. Sohan Singh Josh* and *Pandit Bhagat Ram Sharma*, were ruled out in the Assembly to-day. Through these motions the members wanted to raise the question of the continued detention of the Leader of the Opposition and some other members of the Punjab Assembly, the internment of *L. Duni Chand Ambalvi*, *Pt. Muni Lal Kalia*, and *S. Hari Singh* on account of which they were unable to attend the Assembly and the failure of the Punjab Government to release the detenus.

MATERNITY BENEFIT BILL

Sir Manohar Lal, Finance Minister, then presented the report of the Select Committee on the Punjab Maternity Benefit Bill and moved that the Bill as reported be taken into consideration.

S. Sohan Singh Josh moved that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be circulated for eliciting public opinion. He felt that the Bill as it stood was not adequate and more facilities should be provided for women workers in factories.

The circulation motion was negatived and the Bill was taken up clause by clause.

Mian Nurullah moved an amendment to clause 3 to provide that no woman shall be employed in any factory during the 40 days immediately following the day of her delivery, Government's provision was for 30 days.

Mian Nurullah, who was supported by *Sir Gokul Chand Narang* and *S. Santokh Singh*, said that the maternity period after delivery should not be less than 40 days as was the practice among the Hindus and the Muslims.

S. Santokh Singh said that he had no doubt—and he hoped that *Sir Gokul Chand* would support him—that no factory owner would have any objection to the amendment being accepted.

Sir Manohar Lal, in the course of his reply, maintained that the Bill before the House was a most liberal measure of its kind in the country. In Bengal, when they put on the statute a similar Bill they provided for 28 days. He could not understand how 30 days were inadequate.

Mr. Few opposed the amendment.

Opposition Member :—It does not lie in your mouth to oppose this amendment.

The *Premier* said that if no factory owner had any objection, then the matter was easy and it could be done as desired on a representation being made to the Government.

The amendment was, however, rejected by 15 votes against 62 in the first division of the session.

Sir Manohar Lal accepted another amendment moved by *Mian Nurullah*, who wanted that 12 annas a day should be paid as maternity benefit during the days preceding and following the delivery to the woman employed in a factory.

The Bill was then passed within a few minutes, clause by clause, and then adopted as amended.

TRADE EMPLOYEES BILL

Sir Manohar Lal, who is also Minister in-charge of the Industries Department, next presented the report of the Select Committee on the Punjab Trade Employees (Amendment) Bill and moved for its consideration.

S. Teja Singh Swatantra moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon. His main complaint was that in spite of the Bill, trade employees continued to suffer from injustices. The Select Committee had not given its full and due consideration to the various provisions. Even now trade employees had to work for long hours, without getting any rest, and the interval allowed by the Act was often not allowed by shopkeepers. For this he apportioned blame on shopkeepers and the Inspecting Staff who were hoodwinked by the employers. In the new amended Bill the hours for which shops could remain open had been increased. He wanted more pay for boys of younger age. His grievance was that there were a large number of loopholes in the Trade Employees Act: employers were able to evade the provisions successfully. He wanted the Inspecting Staff to be more active, vigilant and wide awake.

S. Sohan Singh Josh said that unless the Government could enforce at least one close day the Bill would be of no avail. The object of the Act was to provide a day of rest for trade employees.

Sir Manohar Lal, replying to the remarks made by the Opposition members, said that they seemed to be unconscious of the fact that the Bill before them was only an amending Bill of an Act which had been in force since 1940. He had no doubt that the amending Bill carried matters further in the interest of trade employees. It was a travesty of facts to say that there was no close day. It was a surprise how could any responsible member make such a statement. To see that there was a close day and trade employees were having a holiday one had only to walk to the Lawrence Gardens and see a mass of these gentlemen enjoying their holiday on Sundays. Of course, Muslim shops mostly closed on Fridays. The Trade Employees Act had certainly done a great deal for ameliorating the condition of trade employees. Referring to the speech wherein the Select Committee had been criticised, the Minister in-charge described it as a "completely irresponsible" statement. He pointed out that the amending Bill had been considered fully and adopted unanimously by the Select Committee who gave their full consideration to the Bill and reached a unanimous decision regarding it. He was sorry that any one should have attacked the members of the Select Committee.

The circulation motion was rejected and on the motion of *Sir Manohar Lal* the amending Bill, as reported by the Select Committee, was passed without a dissent.

DISTRICT BOARDS BILL

Major Shaukat Hyat Khan next moved that the Punjab District Boards Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

Mr. Bhagat Ram Sharma's motion for recommitment of the Bill to the same select Committee for re-consideration was ruled out.

S. Sohan Singh Josh moved that the Bill be re-circulated.

Mr. Bhagat Ram Sharma and *Mr. Josh* criticised the provisions of the Bill especially the right which the Government wanted to retain for removing any member of a District Board in "public interest."

Major Shaukat Hyat Khan, replying, said that the Bill had been before them for long and had passed through a Select Committee consisting of very able men. The best possible public opinion was in their possession and that public opinion was surely reflected by the House which had been elected by popular vote. The power to remove a member was being taken by a popular and democratic Government which was the custodian of the people's rights and it could certainly be trusted with the task of seeing that no misuse of that power was made.

Mian Abdul Aziz maintained that such a power would be used against popular members and in order to establish and increase the strength of the party now in power.

Mian Nurullah observed that several provisions of the new Bill cut at the root of local self-Government. Why should the Government, for instance, want to have the right not to notify the election of a member, even if he was elected by a majority. If a person could command majority and the electors wanted him to represent them, why should the Government stand in his way. He further asked why the Board should not be given the right to elect their own Executive Officer. He also wanted the number of nominated members to be reduced because he apprehended that nominated members would always influence the decisions of the Board.

Kh. Ghulam Samad wanted nominations to the District Board to be abolished altogether. He voiced the grievances of his community in the District Boards in his Division. He was opposed to the appointment of a non-official chairman of a District Board.

Ch. Muhammad Abdul Rehman, in a humorous speech, said that British diplomacy had succeeded in managing things in such a manner that even though the Britisher remained the ruler, the blame for any failures or wrong doings went to the 'black Indian.' The provision for the appointment of the Executive Officer was a most retrograde one.

S. Teja Singh Swatantra supported the circulation and ironically said that "public interest" meant "interests of the party in power." The circulation motion was lost and the House proceeded to discuss the Bill, clause by clause.

A few formal amendments moved by *K. B. Sheikh Faiz Mohammad*, Parliamentary Secretary, were adopted.

Replying to *Mian Nurullah*, *Major Shaukat Hyat Khan* said that the appointment of the Executive Officer was not a new provision. It had been first introduced by *Sir Gokul Chand*, in municipal committees. He gave an assurance that the Executive Officer would not be imposed upon any Board without reason or necessity. The Executive Officer, he said, would be like the head of a court of wards whom the Government would always be too glad to withdraw as the conditions in the District Board concerned improved.

Mian Nurullah had to put up a battle single-handed against *Major Shaukat Hyat Khan*, who defended the District Board Bill, which had been passed on to him in legacy by the Premier. A number of amendments moved by *Mian Nurullah* were rejected and discussion was proceeding when the House adjourned till November 4.

SIKH GURDWARA (AMEND.) BILL

4th. NOVEMBER :—Immediately before the Assembly proceeded to take up the agenda for the day, *Pt. Bhagat Ram Sarma* raised a point of order regarding the short notice given to the members. The objection was ruled out.

Gyani Kartar Singh asked for leave to introduce the Sikh Gurdwara (amendment) Bill which sought to amend the present Act.

Mian Abdul Haye stated, on behalf of the Government, that they would be prepared to allot a day if *Gyani Kartar Singh* would make a circulation motion on that day. In that event, the Government would support the motion.

Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal, who had arisen in his seat to oppose the introduction motion, wanted to speak, but the *Speaker* said that leave had already been granted. The *Sardar* maintained that he stood up in time to oppose the motion.

The *Speaker*, who said that the member had not stood up in time or anyway had not said that he wanted to speak, declared a little later that the Chair had committed an error in as much as the motion for leave to introduce the Bill had not been put to the House. The *Speaker* wanted to rectify his mistake. The *Speaker*, therefore, called upon *Gyani Kartar Singh* to ask for leave to introduce his Bill.

The *Gyani*, in making the motion, said that certain amendments were being proposed on the basis of experience gained by the working of the Gurdwaras Act. He now wanted to give representation to the Sikhs of the areas outside the British Punjab and to the Depressed Classes. He also wanted to raise the term of the Gurdwara committees from three to five years and further wanted to let the Shromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee spend Rs. 20,000 a year on *Dharam Prachar* instead of Rs. 3,000 as at present allowed.

S. Uttam Singh Duggal, opposing leave for introduction, said that the Akali Party wanted to so manage that all opposition may be kept out of the Gurdwara Committee so that there may be no check on the doings of the Akali Party. The

party had been abusing its powers and there were several cases of embezzlement, etc. as the reports showed. The amending act was unwanted and suicidal and he asked the Government not to support the Bill simply because the Akali Party wanted it.

The motion to introduce the bill was accepted and the bill was introduced

DEBATE ON FOOD SITUATION

Sardar Mal Singh moved the following resolution on the food situation :—
 "This Assembly recommends to the Government to convey to the Government of India the emphatic opinion of this House that any attempt to control the price of wheat will result in very keen resentment and discontent among the agricultural classes."

In moving the resolution, *Sardar Lal Singh* protested against the propaganda which, he said, was being carried on against the Punjab peasant not only in India but in England also where the question had been discussed by the Lords on the basis of misleading reports. *Sardar Lal Singh's* case was that the Punjab grower was the victim of propaganda. It was the lowest price which the Punjab grower was getting as compared to the increase in the prices of other commodities which he had to buy. The difficult situation in Bengal was not the creation of God but that of man. Happily, however, the situation had attracted the attention of the whole country and the Houses of Parliament, but it was regrettable that in their attempt to explain away the circumstances responsible for the situation, even highly placed people had blamed the Punjab and its grower. He maintained that the Punjab had made no money while some other provinces had taken full advantage of the present circumstances.

When *S. Lal Singh* referred to the White Paper which was presented to the House of Parliament, *K. B. Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani*, *Raja Gazanfer Ali* and *Sayed Amjad Ali* shouted : "That is Black Paper, not White Paper." He further said that there had been heavy despatches of wheat from the Punjab. He wanted that there should be no price control in the Punjab. He asked if the Government of India would be willing to undertake to come to the rescue of the Punjab grower in the time of slump which was bound to follow.

The Premier, *Lt. Col. Malik Khizar Hyat Khan*, who intervened in the food debate in this stage, in order to give some facts and figures, cautioned the Government of India against trying again something which had been tried and found wanting. Control of price of wheat, he said, would not be feasible and if they wanted to enforce the control, they must control the prices of all necessary commodities. The Punjab was not greedy. They in the Punjab wanted justice and fairplay. They had been hearing of the Central Government's intention to control the prices of other commodities for a couple of years now and he hoped that the price control ordinance would be enforced. The premier did not want control of prices at present because he feared that it might result in many difficulties and create awkward situations. The Punjab Government had not made any profits. He felt sorry to have to say that the people who discussed the food situation in the House of Parliament seemed to be semi-informed people: anyway, they had not been in possession of facts.

The Punjab was a selling province and the sole purchasers were the Indian Governments through their agents and everybody knew that the relations between a seller and a sole purchaser were not always happy. The Premier said, amidst cheers, that the Punjab should have been given an opportunity to have their say before any minister of His Majesty's Government went up to make a statement on the food situation and the Punjab's responsibility. He wanted a convention to be established in future of letting the provincial Government have their say before an accusation was made against them. Referring to what he called the "sufferings of the silent sufferer"—the Punjab grower—the Premier said that the silent grower suffered because he had no support of the Press or any propaganda machinery. The Premier hoped that the myth against the Punjab peasant would explode. He referred to the condition before war when wheat was sold at Rs. 1-4 to Rs. 1-6-0 per maund. The plight of the Zamindars at that time was indescribable and the Punjab Zamindar was under a debt of Rs. 200 crores. Yet the Punjab grower did not grumble and when the war started the prices of commodities began shooting up. The Government of India enforced control of wheat and, ultimately, the price of wheat was decontrolled not in order to satisfy the grower but as the Central Government had to pay even Rs. 2 more than the control price. When the new harvest came to the "mandies," wheat was sold at

reasonable prices but then started what the Premier called "rumours propaganda" started by interested people. The Premier defended the advice which some leaders of the Zamindars in the Punjab gave to the Zamindars to get high prices for their wheat. That advice was justified and it never meant an advice for hoarding which was amply proved by the fact that arrivals in the "mandies" were 35 percent more than before. He said that there was no reason why U. P., for instance, should be allowed to sell wheat at Rs. 3 per maund more than the Punjab.

K. B. Gurmani : The Punjab grower enjoys the benefits of democracy : he must, therefore, pay for it.

Premier : That is another way of looking at it.

The Premier proceeded to refer to the part the Punjab had now played in connection with the 'Grow-more-food' campaign. Thirty-three lakh acres of land was under cultivation. The Punjab Premier referred to the fact that the Punjab gave its full quota of 9,50,000 tons of food-stuffs to the deficit provinces. In the present year of the total quota of 10 lakh tons which the Punjab had to give, three lakh tons were meant for the civil needs and the Punjab had already given that quota and over and above that 72,000 tons. For the military needs only two lakh tons of wheat remained to be supplied of the total quota but that was only due to the fact that there was only just one agent for that purpose who was not able to have wheat milled. The Premier declared, amidst cheers, that the Punjab was prepared to do its utmost to help Bengal. They were prepared to cut their own rations to help Bengal. But they did not want Bengal's tragedy to be enacted in the Punjab. The Premier was sorry to say that in the committee of experts which made recommendations regarding the price control did not include even one representative of the growers. But when a representative of the Zamindars had an opportunity to have his say he presented an answerable case. He was prepared for fixing ceiling prices provided it was done in case of all the commodities.

S. B. Ujjal Singh said that there was no justification for controlling the price of wheat and he criticised the freezing order.

Sardar Teja Singh Satanttra described the resolution as a result of narrow-mindedness and narrow vision of the mover. The results of the situation in Bengal were of a far more serious nature. Mr. Swatantra felt sorry to say that the present central machinery employed was corrupt. He had no hesitation in saying that wheat at present was not with the poor Kisan but with the big Zamindars and the stockists and now it were they whose interests might be injured. Why could they not put up an efficient machinery for carrying out the rationing scheme. When the Government wanted to arrest and throw people in jails they did it and procured money for the purpose without any difficulty but when asked to do something really good they put in the excuse that they had no money for setting up any machinery.

Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister, quoted figures to show that the Punjab had exported the quota they had to give. In fact, they had met their obligation for exporting their quota for the civil needs 5 months ahead and even sent more than the fixed quota. There had been some difficulty in the matter of getting wagons from some railways.

Sardar Santokh Singh said that he did not think the control of the price of wheat was a necessary at all. There had been a bumper crop this year and he was glad that sufficient wheat was being sent out and he congratulated the Premier on it. He said that, if any control was enforced at this stage, as was done unwisely last year, there would be less of sowing and, therefore, the next crop would be lesser than it had been this year. He suggested, however, that ceiling prices of wheat should be fixed at present so that the price of wheat did not go very high.

He further suggested that the wheat which had been kept in store by the provincial Government should be sold to poor people in the urban areas in times of necessity and not make any profits as they did last year. *Sardar Santokh Singh* criticised Sir Chhotu Ram for having said that the Zamindars should not sell wheat at anything less than 13 rupees per maund. He wished Sir Chhotu Ram would contradict it.

The Premier at once contradicted that the statement in the Press was wrong. He criticised the freezing order which he wanted the Punjab Government to oppose with as great vehemence as any attempt at the control of wheat prices.

Sardar Santokh Singh further stated that things in the Punjab had been moving fairly well and there should be no control of wheat price, specially when wheat ships from outside had already arrived which would certainly result in lowering the price of wheat.

K. B. Mian Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani, who counselled a moderate course, said that if the price of wheat could be fixed on parity with the prices of other commodities and the Government of India would undertake to intervene in the matter of prices even after the war and would take the responsibility of helping the grower, probably no one would have any objection to the enforcement of the control price.

Sardar Sohan Singh Josh, who opposed the resolution with vehemence, referring to the debate in the House, said that it seemed to him that it was the day of the stockists. He was sorry to find that the vision of those supporting the resolution was limited. People here seemed to have no idea that there was something higher also. There was not the Punjab alone. There existed a country—India—and then the whole world beyond. He contended that figures had been quoted to mislead people. In his view the Government of India committed a folly in asking for less quota from the Punjab Government. There had been a bumper crop—much more than any previous crop—and surely the Central Government could have asked for a higher quota of wheat for exports to the deficit provinces. He accused Sir Chhotu Ram of having advised zamindars to hoard and asserted that he had heard such speeches himself.

Sir Chhotu Ram asserted that since April last he had been telling zamindars that the price of wheat between Rs. 10 and 13 per maund was not unreasonable.

Ch. Sahib Dad Khan:—What did you say at Bhiwani?

Sir Chhotu Ram retorted that the Hon'ble member must have tried to misunderstand him for purposes best known to him. His position was that he could not possibly tell one thing to the zamindars outside the legislature and say another thing here because that would shake the very foundation of the confidence which he enjoyed: that confidence was his real mainstay. It was on the strength of the confidence of the zamindars that he had outlined the whole sea of opposition of such a strong press, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress (cheers).

Mr. Josh:—You are right! You enjoy the confidence only of the zamindars; of course, not of the Kisan (laughter).

Resuming his speech Sir Chhotu Ram said that he was a greater friend of the Kisans than Mr. Josh and Swatantra who had become "Partantra", who once used to cry hoarse that British must be turned out, but to-day, through some unknown process, they had changed to such an extent that they were now seen rebuking the Punjab Government for not having done enough for the war effort. He was surprised why strange things were being said merely in order to please the Government of India. Sir Chhotu Ram, referring to the defence which Josh had put in for the rationing system, said that the British Government was paying Rs. 138 crores yearly from its coffers for helping the rationing purpose but the Government of India was not prepared to pay even a spurious coin. The Revenue Minister further said that they were prepared to agree to the control if the Punjab grower could be given at least 15 per cent profit as had been promised for other commodities. Failing that the Government should agree to let the Punjab grower have a price for a maund of wheat as many times high as the price of necessary commodities have arisen, whether they were three or four or even five times. If that was done, there would be no need for controlling the price of wheat.

Mian Nurullah moved an amendment to the resolution: That for the words "price of wheat" the following be substituted:—

"Prices of wheat and other agricultural produce in the Punjab until and unless proper and effective control is achieved on all articles an agriculturist has to purchase."

Mian Nurullah thought that inflation should have been checked and the exchange should have controlled. If you go on printing currency notes, you can't solve the problem.

At the suggestion of Mr. Abdul Rab, the Premier agreed to give two-hours on the next day for the debate on the resolution. Mian Nurullah was still on his legs when the House adjourned.

6th. NOVEMBER:—Discussion was resumed on the wheat control resolution in the Assembly this afternoon. Mian Nurullah, who concluded his yesterday's incomplete speech, said that unless inflation was checked no ceiling prices could be fixed.

K. B. Sardar Mohd. Hassan Khan Gurchani, who supported the resolution, said that they were loyal people and the Government should not control the price of wheat against their wishes.

Mr. *Abdul Rab* opposed control and said that there was indirect control already with the result that the prices had not gone high.

Sir Gokul Chand Narang, who wanted information from the Minister in charge of Food, was told by *S. Baldev Singh* that the Punjab has a surplus of one million tons of wheat which they could afford to send away without endangering the needs of their own province, in any manner.

Sir Gokul Chand :—Supposing the Government of India would like to purchase all your surplus for Bengal or other needy parts of the country, what do you think would be a reasonable price which you would be prepared to accept ?

S. Baldev Singh :—We have so far received no such proposal from the Government of India but if one is made we would consider that favourably.

Sir Gokul Chand :—Thank you very much for your offer (laughter).

S. Jagjit Singh Mann :—This is a matter that concerns the agriculturists and they alone should be allowed to speak.

Lala Sita Ram Mehra opposed the resolution. He agreed that the cost of production had increased but that did not mean that the price of wheat should be allowed to go high to any extent. He suggested that some maximum price must be fixed. The price of wheat had risen very high and if it was allowed to go higher still how could people who earned their daily wages or got fixed monthly salaries make their two ends meet ? After all, the Government had, at the most, given 10 per cent dearness allowance to its employees. An increase of pay by Rs. 10 to Rs. 25 could, in no way, help the poor men in various civil services when prices had gone up by 300 per cent to 400 per cent and even to 500 per cent. The men in civil services, whether of the Punjab Government, or private concerns, certainly required consideration. He suggested the formation of a committee of officials and non-officials to consider the increase in prices and then decide after mutual discussion some maximum price of wheat.

Sardar Jagjit Singh Mann supported the resolution and warned the Government of India against controlling the price of wheat.

Ch. Suraj Mall, while agreeing that Government servants should be given more salaries in the present difficult times, did not like that that should be done at the cost of the Zamindars. The Punjab had made no profits and he quoted an instance to show that the province did not make a profit of Rs. 16,50,000 when it could easily do so. A Calcutta firm had offered to purchase 1,50,000 maunds of rice at Rs. 28 per maund but the Director of Civil Supplies wrote back to say that they were selling rice at Rs. 17 per maund and they would not charge anything more than that. He was prepared to agree to control of the wheat price provided the prices of all the commodities, especially those which the Zamindar had to buy, were fixed. If reasonable prices were fixed the Zamindar would be prepared to sell all his wheat.

Pandit Bhagat Ram Sharma maintained that at present the tendency was to hoard or, at any rate, keep back wheat in the hope of getting high prices. He suggested the fixing of price for wheat. Mr. Sharma expressed surprise that a person like the Premier of the Punjab, who had not hesitated to carry out the behests of the Central Government and had shut up behind prison bars a large number of Congressmen without any reason, had threatened not to tolerate rule under Section 93 of the Government of India Act.

Raja Gazanfar Ali, Parliamentary Secretary, said that the Government of India constituted as it was does not enjoy the confidence of the people of this country. If a Government did not enjoy the confidence of the people, how could it enforce any orders or ordinances ? The largest political organisation in the country was shut up behind the bars, and the second largest organisation in the country was dissatisfied with the present Government of India. The Punjab Government was the only Government which had stood by the Central Government but now it was also getting disgusted with the policy that was being pursued by it. The remedy for all ills from which India at present suffered was, in the speaker's view, the establishment of National Government with Congress, if possible, and without it, if necessary.

Raja Gazanfar Ali maintained that the present Government of India was the most inefficient Government in the whole world. The members of the Government of India did not enjoy the confidence of the people. They represented no one and no one was prepared to attach any importance to what they said. It would be unwise and dangerous, he said, for the Central Government to pick a quarrel with the Provincial Government. People were taking pride evading the orders of the Government of India. Kerosene oil and many other necessities

were not available to the poor villager. If the Central Government enforced control against the wishes of the Punjab Government there would be troubles, much more than they had experienced in the past. Raja Gazanfar Ali's interesting conclusion from the present situation was that the centre should have nothing to do with the provinces. India, he said, was too big a country to be controlled by one Centre.

Ch. Ahmed Yar Khan, maintained that the Zamindar was not getting an adequate return for his labour. He thought that control of the wheat price would entail unnecessary hardship on the zamindar.

Sodhi Harnam Singh, Raja Farman Ali and Pir Akbar Ali supported the resolution.

Maulvi Mazhar Ali Azhar (Ahrar) said that inspite of the non-enforcement of control of wheat price, conditions, like those in Bengal, might appear in the Punjab. They knew that the former Premier of Bengal did not want rice to be taken away from Bengal, yet rice was taken away from that province. He cautioned against distressing conditions arising in the Punjab inspite of the fact that there were large stocks of wheat because circumstances could arise wherein it might become impossible to get sufficient wheat in big district towns. The Punjab Government should see that this situation did not arise. He referred to the difficulties of the employees in the Government Press where the subordinate employees were getting very little pays. Things were already bad and might become worse. No doubt conditions just at present were not terrible but poormen were selling whatever little gold or silver ornaments they possessed.

Bibi Ragbir Kaur opposed the resolution and criticised the administration which, she said, was corrupt. She said corruption was responsible for the failure of the control system.

Ch. Mohd. Abdul Rahman (Ahrar) blamed the foreign administration for their present difficulties. Poverty and nakedness could not be put an end to and if they wanted to do that they must become free. He criticised those in-charge of sugar distribution and said that only the favoured ones could get sugar. In some cases only a few bags were distributed, the rest disappearing.

S. Lal Singh, replying to the debate, urged the adoption of the resolution by the House unanimously.

The Minister in-charge of Food, *S. Baldev Singh* explained the position of the Punjab Government. He said that while the Punjab Government had readily accepted many restrictions and had not objected to the limited control which already existed, it would not accept any statutory control of wheat prices. They in the Punjab, could accept wheat price control only if the prices of other commodities were also brought down and controlled. They were not unaware of the fact that the Government of India had promulgated an ordinance to stabilise the prices of other commodities by fixing the profit, but it yet remained to be seen how that ordinance worked and whether in actual practice prices came down. Sardar Baldev Singh wanted to make it clear that the Punjab Government had no intention to blame any Provincial Government or any party. But he had no hesitation in saying that whatever the Punjab Government's representatives had said with regard to the Government of India and profiteering indulged in by some provincial Governments had remained unanswered. Sardar Baldev Singh contradicted Mr. Josh and claimed great credit for the Punjab Government for its having carried out with great success the "grow more food" campaign. While some other provincial Governments had been given from Rs. 5 lakhs to even Rs. 20 lakhs by the Central Government for propaganda etc. to encourage people to grow more food, the Punjab Government had not got any thing. In spite of that 33 lakh acres had been brought under cultivation with the result that the Punjab today produced one million ton of foodgrains over and above the crop for the year 1942. While last year they could export only 7,50,000 tons of foodgrains, this year they had been able to give over 15 lakh tons of foodgrains for export to the deficit provinces and to the Government of India for military purposes. Dealing with the plea put forward by the Communist members for rationing, S. Baldev Singh said that the Punjab Government was not opposed to rationing. In fact, they were already working on rationing basis. If the unit, which had been adopted in Bombay, was adopted here, every adult would have to be given 1 lb. of foodgrains and a child 1/2 lb., while a labourer would have to be given 1 1/2 lbs. The population of the Punjab according to the 1941 census was 2 crores and 84 lakhs of which the rural population was 2,41 lakhs and the urban population 43 lakhs. The population on the above ration basis would require 53,14,000 tons of foodgrains (47 lakh tons for the rural

areas where the basic unit is of a labourer and 6,14,000 tons for urban population). The Punjab had produced a little over 74 lakh tons of foodgrains of which 10 lakh tons were grams and these were mostly used for the cattle and according to the figures available about 7 lakh tons of grams were used for that purpose. In all about 60 lakh tons of foodgrains were required both for the human and the animal population in the Punjab. About 15 lakhs tons of foodgrains were left as surplus and that was what the Punjab had agreed to give to other deficit provinces and the Government of India." In view of the above facts, the Minister said, it was clear that the Punjab was already living on the rationing basis and there was no need, in the opinion of the Punjab Government, to undertake additional expenditure for establishing and running a machinery for working the rationing scheme. There was no need of such a machinery as the Punjab had fulfilled its obligations towards everyone. Referring to what he choose to describe as "wrong reports in a section of the Vernacular Press," S. Baldev Singh asserted that it was wrong that Sir Chhotu Ram and the Speaker had any stocks of wheat. He added, "I have no stocks of wheat and Sir Chhotu Ram has much less". He pointed out that the arrivals in the 'Mandis' this year were much more than during the previous years. How could that have happened if the Zamindars had been advised to hoard?

Malik Barkat Ali.—That was in spite of you. (laughter).

Sardar Baldev Singh quoted figures to show that during the last 3 months 1,58,000, 1,41,000 and 63,000 tons, respectively, of foodgrains, which were part of wheat was actually brought for being exported undespached at the godowns or at some of the godowns or at some of the railway stations.

Mr. Josh.—Is the railway to be blamed?

S. Baldev Singh.—No one is prepared to accept the blame. Continuing, *Sardar Baldev Singh* said that everybody had sympathy with the people of Bengal in their distress and the Punjab would always be willing to render whatever help it can. He added that they had kept no secrets and they were prepared to accept the blame for any wrong done by them.

The Minister-in-charge of Food, S. Baldev Singh repeated the Punjab Government's opposition to statutory control and declared that under the present conditions if control of wheat prices was enforced it would result in chaos and that no one would like it. No control would be effective unless they would requisition all the wheat. Did Mr. Josh want that wheat should be requisitioned?

Mr. Josh.—Yes, all those who pay more than Rs. 200 as land revenue, their stocks should be requisitioned.

S. Baldev Singh maintained that dealers and District Magistrates, in fact everybody excepting 2 or 3 members here, were opposed to control.

Mr. Josh.—Don't quote the District Magistrates, they are your henchmen.

S. Baldev Singh said :—"The Government of India had to pay on an average Rs. 10-4 per maund and undoubtedly that was not an unreasonable price. When wheat was sold at Rs. 8-8 which was the lowest price the Government of India failed to make heavy purchases as they had no adequate arrangements. The Punjab which had rendered great service in war had also helped in the matter of growing more food."

S. Baldev Singh was pained at Mr. Amery's statement in Parliament and said that he had ignored the huge stocks of wheat which the Punjab had given to deficit provinces. Of the one million tons of wheat quota 7 lakhs had been supplied already and the remaining would be sent in 5 months time still ahead. Concluding, S. Baldev Singh referred to the freezing of stocks by orders of the Central Government and said that the Punjab Government had as much responsibility to protect the rights of the dealers as that of the growers. They would see that the dealers do not suffer. He was one of those who believed that trade and agriculture must go hand in hand and the interests of both must be safeguarded.

Pt. Bhagat Ram.—Have you consulted Sir Chhotu Ram? (laughter).

The resolution moved by *S. Lal Singh* was adopted without a division.

Gyani Kartar Singh moved for the circulation of his Gurdwara Amendment Bill till January 15, 1944 without a speech.

Tikka Jagjit Singh Bedi moved an amendment that the Bill be circulated till March, 1, 1944. The amendment was accepted. The House then adjourned till November 8.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS VOTED

8th. NOVEMBER.—In about half an hour the Assembly voted today supplementary demands presented by the Finance Minister, *Sir Monohar Lal*, for an amount of Rs. 1,04,32,110 for defraying the charges in respect of various depart-

ments. All the cut motions moved were rejected and the demand on which a division was claimed by a Communist member was voted by 53 votes against 8.

PUNJAB LAND ALIENATION (AMEND.) BILL

Sir Chhotu Ram, Revenue Minister, introduced the Punjab Alienation of Land (Amendment) Bill and asked that the Bill be referred to a select committee consisting of the following members :—*Raja Gazanfar Ali*, *Sh. Faiz Mohd.*, *Ch. Sumar Singh*, *S. Lal Singh*, *K. B. Mohd. Hussain*, *R. B. Hari Chand*, *M. Abdull Rab*, *S. B. Gurbaksh Singh*, *Mian Mumtaz Daulatana*, *S. Teja Singh Swatantra*, *R. B. Mukand Lal Puri*, *R. B. Gopal Das*, *S. Santokh Singh* and *Sir Chhotu Ram*.

The statement of objects and reasons of the Bill says : "This legislation is being promoted with the object of removing a number of defects in the Act which have been brought to light by the judgment of the Lahore High Court in the case "*Malawa Mal versus Punjab Province*" [I. L. R. (1942) Lahore 758] and the judgment of the Federal Court in the case "*Punjab Province versus Daulat Singh*" (1942 F. C. R. 67). Opportunity has also been taken of removing a number of defects which have been revealed in the actual working of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1900, and of making a number of consequential amendments which were not carried out when the Amending Acts of 1935 and 1940 were passed.

Sir Chhotu Ram, while commending the Select Committee motion to the House, said that the Bill was being introduced with a view to make up certain shortcomings. By the decision of the High Court the Commissioners had been deprived of their revisional jurisdictions in respect of appeals arising out of the orders of the Deputy Commissioners which defect was intended to be set right. Another part of the Bill relates to removing the disadvantages which the agriculturist money-lender suffered as against a non-agriculturist money-lender. All the provisions for appeal were now sought to be consolidated. The Bill was intended to steer clear of all loopholes, and in the light of the experiences they had gained they had hammered out the new Bill.

Sir Gokul Chand Narang, who moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion till March 31, 1944, was the solitary voice of protest in the House. *Dr. Narang* said that he knew the fate his motion would meet but he was making the motion as a matter of duty. *Sir Gokul Chand* said that amendments had been made in the Alienation of Land Act from time to time before also but the late *Sir Fazal-i-Hussain* gave an assurance in the then Provincial Legislative Council that they would not go either backward or forward in the matter of that Act. The late *Sir Sikander Hyat Khan* had also given a similar assurance before the amending Act of 1938 was brought up. But *Sir Gokul Chand* was sorry to say that none of those assurances were being kept. Then again, when the *Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact* was entered into, they were told that no controversial measures would be brought up for the duration of war. The non-agriculturist members of the Punjab Assembly declared at a representative meeting, where representatives of *Sir Chhotu Ram's* group were also present, that they would cease to carry on any agitation against the Land Alienation Act. That showed their readiness to forget the wounds which had been inflicted upon them and the injustices which had been done to the non-agriculturists. They did so in order to show their goodwill to the agriculturists. They had hoped that the measure would leave them alone as they had wanted to leave it alone. It seemed, however, that the measure would not leave them.

Sir Gokul Chand referred to his opposition to the previous amending Bills which he criticised in the House and in the Press and how he had pointed out that the amending Bills were '*ultra vires*' of the legislature. He was glad that the highest court of law in India had given a decision by which his view was supported. He was sorry to say that the Punjab Unionist Ministry seemed to have taken a vow to carry on a fight against the civil courts in the province. The Government would not allow any opportunity to be lost to clip the wings of those courts and they had made serious encroachments upon the powers of the civil courts. The Bill would go far ahead and would have far-reaching effects on the rights of proprietorship of lands, it would upset the whole thing, and result in declaring the transactions void and would thus cause heavy losses to the persons who might have entered into those transactions and would also ruin the children and grandchildren of those whose fathers or grand-fathers had committed the 'folly' of entering into such transactions. The Deputy Commissioners were now being given powers to upset any transactions made. Supposing a land which had been mortgaged to someone 30 years back now comes to be greatly improved or in view

of the locality in which that land is situated its importance increases and along with it, its price, the mortgager would have only to go to the Deputy Commissioner and by paying a small proportionate amount he would be able to get back the land from mortgagee or the lessee, no matter when and for how long the transaction was made. If, however, the mortgager could pay all the money he had received the mortgagee could be rejected at once by orders of the Deputy Commissioner who would not have even to go into the formalities of law. At present the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner once obtained regarding the sale of a land was considered final and the mortgagee or the lessee could proceed to build anything on the land, but according to the amending Bill the mortgager may go and apply to the Commissioner at any time and have the sanction set aside. The mortgager would at any time—to which there would be no limit—be able to go to the Financial Commissioner on revision. The result would be that in future no purchaser would be able to begin putting a plot of land to any use without having to wait for a very long and indefinite time even though he might have spent a lakh of rupees on that land for building a factory. Any sanction obtained may be upset and then in the event of a sanction being upset the mortgager would not get even his whole amount and interest thereon but just a small amount as a retainer. The Unionist Government had lost all sense of proportion in dealing with such a matter. They seemed to have no sense of decency.

Speaker : Will the Bill have retrospective effect ?

Sir Gokul Chand : Yes, Sir.

Sir Gokul Chand added that it was sheer injustice which was being done without any regard to the principles of justice and equity. In the old days when the Kings wanted to have anything belonging to any individual they used to take it at the point of bayonet. The Unionist Government was just now acting in that manner and managing to get everything by force of a Bill with the support of a majority. Concluding *Dr. Narang* said that it was but proper that the class of persons who were affected by the Bill should be given an opportunity to have their say. The Judges, the members of the Bar, the Deputy Commissioners and persons competent to say should be given an opportunity to express their views.

Mian Nurullah, who supported the Select Committee motion, made a few suggestions which, *Sir Chhotu Ram* said, would be placed before the Select Committee if the member would send those in writing to him.

Replying to *Sir Gokul Chand Narang*, *Sir Chhotu Ram* maintained that the arguments which had been advanced by *Sir Gokul Chand* were by no means new. The subject of 'Benami' transactions had been before them for the last 5 years. People competent to express any opinion on the matter had expressed their opinions and these had been considered by the Government earlier.

Sir Gokul Chand :—Did you circulate your Bill even then ?

Sir Chhotu Ram :—We had the opinions of the persons competent to express opinions. The previous amending Bills had been considered and passed by the House after due deliberation. *Sir Chhotu Ram* then referred to the assurance which according to *Sir Gokul Chand* the late *Sir Fazal-i-Hussain* had given.

Sir Gokul Chand :—Is that assurance also dead with the late *Sir Fazal-i-Hussain* ?

Sir Chhotu Ram replied that the assurance had been given for the period of existence of the Government of which *Sir Fazal-i-Hussain* was a member. A democratic person like the late *Sir Fazal-i-Hussain* could not have given any assurance which would bound down every successor to that Government which was not responsible to anyone.

Sir Gokul Chand :—We were not aware of any such mental reservations.

Continuing *Sir Chhotu Ram* said that the late *Sir Sikander's* assurance must have been an assurance of a similar nature and not for all times but for the time of the Government of which he was a member also.

Sir Chhotu Ram controverted *Sir Gokul Chand* and declared that as a result of the *Sikander-Baldev* Pact there had been no understanding by which it was undertaken by *Sir Sikander Hyat* that no controversial measure would be brought up before the legislature for the duration of the war. If there was an impression to that effect it was an erroneous impression and should be removed. No such understanding was given by anyone to anybody.

Sir Gokul Chand :—But that is what was published in the press.

Sir Chhotu Ram :—I am not responsible for what the press publishes.

Sir Chhotu Ram maintained that what was said by *Sir Sikander Hyat Khan* was that no fresh taxation measure affecting one class only would be brought up for the duration of war. That assurance they were honouring.

Sir Gokul Chand :—Will it be adhered to?

Premier :—Yes.

Concluding, Sir Chhotu Ram asserted that by the new amending Bill the Government merely wanted to restore what was lacking and there had been no encroachments.

The circulation motion having been rejected, the amending Bill was referred to a Select Committee, there being a solitary voice of dissent. The House then adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS RULED OUT

9th. NOVEMBER :—An adjournment motion to raise a discussion on the "treatment being meted out to Mr. Jai Parkash Narain, General Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party, arrested recently somewhere in the Punjab and at present reported to be in the Lahore Fort under the direct supervision of the Punjab C. I. D." which stood in the name of Mr. *Bhagat Ram Sharma*, was ruled out by the *Speaker* in the Assembly to-day.

Similar motions of Mr. *Sharma* to discuss the failure of the Punjab Government to release *Dewan Chaman Lal*, *Maulana Daud Ghaznavi* and *S. Atma Singh* of *Sheikhupura* who were lying seriously ill in detention were ruled out.

S. Sohan Singh Josh asked for permission to move an adjournment motion by which he wanted to raise a discussion on the recent restriction imposed on tickets being issued by the N. W. Railway for *Nankana Sahib* during the days of the *Mela*. This restriction he regarded as an interference with the people's rights of worship.

The *Premier* read out a statement in which it was stated that the restriction had been imposed by the Government of India in pursuance of their general policy of restricting big *Melas* on account of their inability to afford transport facilities due to war. The Punjab Government merely issued the notification of the Central Government and now the *Premier* had written again to the Central Government impressing upon them the inconvenience caused to the Sikh community.

The *Premier* added humorously that he was glad and thankful to God that Mr. *Josh*—a communist—still thought of *Nankana Sahib* and rights of worship.

Mr. *Josh* warmed up and protested against the remarks made by the *Premier* and the "mischievous insinuation contained in them." He said that he, like every communist, stood for the protection of rights and privileges of every citizen.

Lt. Col. *Khizar Hayat Khan*, replying, assured Mr. *Josh* that he never meant to attack him nor had he done so. Amidst laughter, Lt. Col. *Khizar Hyat* added: "After all, you know I am a Jat and supposed to be semi-educated; and if I say anything which appears to be harsh, do not mind it."

The adjournment motion was not pressed.

TOBACCO VEND FEES BILL

The Punjab Tobacco Vend Fees (Amendment) Bill which was introduced by *Sir Manohar Lal*, Finance Minister, was passed without any discussion. The Bill had been brought up to effect certain amendments in the Act which had become necessary as a result of the imposition of a central excise duty on tobacco.

IMMOVABLE PROPERTY TAX BILL

The Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax (Amendment) Bill, which was introduced by *Sir Manohar Lal*, Finance Minister, was taken into consideration and passed at once.

The statement of objects and reasons of the Bill says: "An assessing authority is required under subsection (1) of section 18 of the Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax Act, 1940, to call for a return not only when a new valuation list is to be made but also when the current valuation list is to be amended. It was never intended that this elaborate procedure should be followed in the case of casual amendments for which a separate procedure is laid down in section 9 of the Act. The Bill is designed to enforce the real intention of the Act."

SUGARCANE BILL

Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister, moved that the Sugarcane (Punjab Amendment) Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

Mian Nurullah moved an amendment, which was supported by *Sardar Santokh Singh* and *Sir Gokul Chand Narang*. The amendment was intended to secure the deletion of the provision laying down that no sugar factory or extension of a sugar factory could be built without a licence being taken.

Sardar Santokh Singh felt sorry to say that the Punjab Government was following a policy of killing industries. The task of taking a licence was not easy. So far there was no overcrowding in the sugar industry in the Punjab and the 'wise' Government of the Punjab should not be in a hurry to injure it.

S. Teja Singh Swatantra said that by the provision which was desired to be deleted it was clear that the myth of the Punjab Government being opposed to control was exploded.

Sir Gokul Chand Narang, who supported *Mian Nurullah* in a neat little Punjabee speech, felt constrained to say that those sitting opposite seemed to be a family of mad men who knew not what they were doing.

He pitied *Sardar Baldev Singh*, who, he said, was carrying some body else's baby and asked him to realise what folly was being committed by attempting to kill an industry.

S. Baldev Singh :—You know whose baby it is (laughter).

Sir Gokul Chand :—Why have you taken up this damnable "Siapa."

S. Baldev Singh :—"Siapa gul paigaya hai" (laughter).

Sir Gokul Chand pointed out that there was no need of such a provision as there were hardly two sugar factories in the Punjab and there was no excess of sugar. In the States, all sorts of facilities were being actually given for putting up factories and he wondered why the Punjab was following an unwise path.

Sardar Baldev Singh, replying, said that it was not at all the intention of the Punjab Government to close down any sugar factories. The Punjab Government was not opposed to industrial development and he could say that they would be prepared to render all help in this matter. But they could not forget to protect the rights of the agriculturists and if any industry in a particular area would become a burden to the agriculturists, they had to be protected. Had not *Sir Gokul Chand* experienced the hardship by the opening of another sugar mill at Hamira, he asked.

The amendment moved by *Mian Nurullah* was rejected.

CESS BURDEN ON GROWERS

Mian Nurullah moved another amendment through which he wanted that instead of six pies per maund being charged as cess on sugarcane from the producer as proposed, it should be 3 pies per maund if the price was 6 annas per maund or over and not exceeding six pies per maund if the price was 8 annas per maund or over. The mover pointed out that he was making a very humble demand to save the sugarcane grower.

Sir Gokul Chand, who supported the amendment of *Mian Nurullah*, quoted figures in support of his contention that the new cess would mean a further burden on the poor sugarcane grower. He wanted no cess to be imposed at all. *Sir Gokul Chand* addressed the Ministerialists particularly and told them that at the proposed rate of 6 pies per maund, every sugarcane grower would have to give Rs. 12-8 per acre as an additional tax to what he had to pay already in the form of land revenue etc. He said that Rs. 250 would have to be paid by the sugarcane grower per season to the Government before entering a factory. He based his calculation on 400 maunds being the production of one acre and the average land for production being 20 acres. *Sir Gokul Chand Narang* declared that the sugar factory owners in the Punjab were prepared to pay Re. one per maund for sugarcane, provided, of course, the price of sugar was raised proportionately. *Sir Shri Ram*, he added, had even offered, in an article, that the factory owners were prepared to pay Rs. 1-2 per maund. But the Government of India stood in their way. That Government would not agree. Sugar was being sold at Rs. 12 per maund but *shakkar* at Rs. 20 per maund. He asked why the Punjab Government was not taking up a strong attitude in this matter also against the Government of India and prevail upon them to agree to let the factory owner pay more i. e. Rs. 1-2 per maund to the grower. The Punjab was growing sugarcane in 417,000 acres of land and the increase in price of sugar to Rs. 1-2 per maund would bring Rs. 75,00,000 more to the grower.

The Punjab Government was a bad and incompetent copyist. In the present case, the Punjab Government seemed to be following what the U. P. Government had announced that whatever amount they would get would be utilised for the good of the grower. Would the Punjab Government use the money for building any roads or getting better seeds and helping the grower to grow better sugarcane as the U. P. Government was doing? In the U. P., such an Act was enforced be-

cause there were as many as 150 sugar mills and in the Punjab there were only 2 mills. He asked the ministerialist members to ponder over the situation before voting.

S. Santokh Singh supported the amendment.

S. Baldev Singh, Development Minister, replying, said that the cess of 6 pies per maund was to be collected from the factory owner.

Sir Gokul Chand :—That cess would be charged from the grower.

S. Baldev Singh maintained that the burden of the cess would not fall on the agriculturist. If the Government of India stood in the way of paying Rs. 1-2 per maund of sugarcane, as suggested by *Sir Shri Ram*, no one stood in the way of increasing the price to 13 annas per maund. He asked why was not that being done.

The amendment was rejected by 12 vote to 55. *S. Baldev Singh*, however, accepted one amendment of *Mian Nurullah*. The clauses were passed as amended.

The Bill was opposed at its third reading stage by *S. Sohan Singh Josh*, *Ch. Mohd Abdul Rehman*, *L. Sita Ram* and *Pt. Bhagat Ram Sharma* who accused the Government of burdening the poor zamindar, even though it always claimed to be their friend.

Sir Chhotu Ram refuted the charge and said that the responsibility of not having exempted all the zamindars who paid Rs. 5 or less as their land revenue was his. But he was sure that the zamindars had accepted his reasons, because the money thus available was to be spent by the Government for the benefit of the smaller zamindars themselves.

The Bill was passed and the House adjourned 'sine die'.

The N. W. F. Pr. Legislative Assembly

Budget Session—Peshawar—17th, to 27th August 1943

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1943-44

Mr. Sardar Bahadur Khan (Muslim League) was elected Speaker of the Frontier Assembly when the Budget session opened at Peshawar on the 17th. August 1943. The Opposition (Congress) benches were empty. Twenty-three members of the Ministerialist Party were present.

On taking the chair the new *Speaker* thanked the House for the honour done to him and assured members of all parties of his sympathy and co-operation. He regretted that the members of the Opposition were not present in the Assembly and requested the press to convey to them his message that he had now ceased to be a member of any party.

BUDGET PRESENTED

Sardar Abdur Rab Khan Nishtar, Finance Minister, presented the budget estimates for the year 1943-44. While doing so he made an appeal to all parties and communities in the province to unite and help the poor people through these difficult times. The Finance Minister revealed that the revenue for 1943-44 was estimated at Rs. 206.94 lakhs including a subvention of Rs. 1 crore from the Centre and it was anticipated that the year's working would leave a net deficit of Rs. 7.73 lakhs to be met from the accumulated surpluses of previous years. This deficit was due almost entirely to the provision made for expenditure on the civil defence organization which would disappear when the war ended. The Finance Member pointed out that their revenues consisted of a fixed subvention from the Centre and other items which were mostly inelastic. Government could not hope to achieve much from the latter source and therefore their main hope lay in persuading the Government of India to increase their subvention. This, he said, we propose to do when we have settled down in office and have made a comprehensive survey of the whole position, to enable us to take in hand those essential schemes, so long neglected, for the benefit of the people of this province. The Finance Minister explained at length the measures for the supply of foodgrains, sugar, standard cloth and kerosene oil in the province and assured that Government was taking every step to supply wheat at a reasonable price. Concluding, the Finance Minister said : "We have entered upon our duties at a very difficult time. The war has upset the living conditions of all of us and in order to achieve any

improvement the full co-operation of all is necessary. Our constitutional and financial limitations make our task difficult but where there is a will there is a way and we shall endeavour to provide the people with the necessities of life and to see that they get these at reasonable rates.

INTRODUCTION OF OFFICIAL BILLS

18th. AUGUST :—The Assembly met this morning with Khan Sardar Bahadur Khan, the new Speaker, in the chair. Before the House started to transact the business of the day, *Sardar Ishar Singh* (Congress) was sworn in as a member. Immediately after the oath-taking ceremony, *Sardar Ishwar Singh* left the House.

Like yesterday, the opposition members absented themselves and only members of the League Party were present.

The Finance Minister, *Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar* moved two official bills, the N. W. F. P. Ministers' salaries (second Amendment) Bill, 1943, and the N. W. F. P. Speaker's and Deputy Speaker's Salaries (Amendment) Bill, 1940, which were passed without opposition.

Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, Chief Minister, moved four bills, the N. W. F. P. Pre-emption (Amendment) Bill, the N. W. F. P. War Services (exemption) from Disqualification Bill, the N. W. F. P. Motor Vehicle Taxation (Amendment) Bill and the N. W. F. P. Village Council (Amendment) Bill, which were passed.

The fifth Bill, namely the N. W. F. P. Trade Employees Bill, was circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon by February 1, 1944.

The Speaker read out the Bills which were passed during the time of the Congress Ministry and assented to by His Excellency the Governor. The Speaker declared that only the Goondas Bill had been rejected.

To-day was the official business day and the whole work was finished in 30 minutes. The House then adjourned

CONDOLENCE TO DECEASED MEMBERS

19th. AUGUST :—Tributes were paid to the memory of *Khan Allah Dad Khan*, *Sardar Jagat Singh*, *R. B. Chamanlal* and *R. B. Kanwarbhan Bagai*, late M. L. As., when the House met this morning.

Speeches were delivered by *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan*, Chief Minister, and *Sardar Ajit Singh*, Minister for P. W. D. *Sardar Bahadur Khan*, the Speaker also made a short speech and adjourned the House for 15 minutes as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased members.

SIKH RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL

Sardar Ajit Singh, Minister of Public Works, moved that the N. W. F. P. Sikh Religious Endowments Bill, 1939, which was being piloted by him as a member of the opposition, be referred to another select committee, consisting of the Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, the Advocate-General *Nawab Zafar Khan* (Muslim League), *Rai Bahadur Ishwar Das* (Hindu Independent), *Sardar Ishwar Singh* (Congress), *Peer Kamran* (Muslim League) and the mover. *Sardar Ajit Singh* said that the bill had been designed to provide for better management of the income of Sikh Gurdwaras, Dharamsalas and religious endowments in the N. W. F. Province. He assured the Sikh organisations and *Guru Singh Sabhas* that the bill would not undermine their status and functions. The House referred the Bill to a select committee.

The House, after finishing the business in five minutes, adjourned. As usual, the Opposition was again absent from the House.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

20th. AUGUST :—For the fourth day in succession, the Opposition members were again absent from the House. However, it was a day for general discussion of the budget.

Replying to the speeches, *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan*, Chief Minister justified his action in forming a ministry in the province. With the help of his colleagues, he was able to have a people's government in the province. The Chief Minister also announced in the House that adequate steps had already been taken by the Ministry to end the Frontier Crimes Regulation. Replying to *K. B. Saadullah Khan's* demand for the Pakistan resolution to be moved in the House, the Chief Minister said that their policy was well known that they stood for Pakistan and the Sikhs stood for Azad Punjab.

The Education Minister, *Khan Saminjan Khan's* speech was heard by the House with rapt attention. Referring to the absence of the Opposition, he said that the ornament of the august House was missing and appealed to them (the Opposition) to attend the next session and benefit the House by their healthy

criticism. While dealing with the budget estimates, Khan Saminjan Khan referred to the grant that amounts to one crore of rupees as subsidy by the Central Government. He said that the grant was a slur on the name of the Frontier province: it was on account of that grant that they depended on the Central Government, which was directly ruling the Provincial Government. It was wrong to say that their province, like other Provinces, was enjoying full autonomy. As a matter of fact, their province was a creation of imperialist necessity: they made it because they wanted it. Khan Saminjan Khan asked the Central Government not to give the money in the form of a grant but resources should be pooled so that the N. W. F. P. should have independent income of the same amount, in order that the province might get rid of dependency on the Centre.

Winding up the debate, the Finance Minister, Mr. *Nishtar* in a forceful speech, criticised the Congress policy of not accepting offices and creating a deadlock in the country. By leaving the ministries the Congress had done what the British Government actually wanted.

Replying to the Education Minister, the *Finance Minister* said that the grant of a crore of rupees from the Centre was not charity, but it was their right.

Sardar Ajit Singh, in a short speech, said that theirs was a ministry of comrades, based on coalition. He also criticised the Congress policy of absenting themselves from the Opposition Benches.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

21st. AUGUST:—The Assembly met to-day to discuss non-official resolutions.

It was significant to note that *Khan Abdur Rashid Khan*, who until yesterday absented from the House along with the Congress Party as a member of the Opposition and who, before the beginning of the session, was a member of the Muslim League Party, attended to-day's session and took his seat on the Treasury benches. He, however, played a very interesting role, sometimes opposing and sometimes supporting the Government. When interviewed by the "United Press" representative in the lobby, *Khan Abdul Rashid Khan* evaded the question of ever leaving the Muslim League Party or leaving the Opposition at present.

The House first took up the resolution moved by *Khan Attai Khan*, demanding the establishment of an Intermediate College at Abbottabad, which was passed. The *Education Minister* assured the House on behalf of the Government to give the fullest consideration to the proposal.

The resolution of *Arbab Sher Ali Khan* for controlling and utilising inundation water in Bara River for the benefit of the peasants was withdrawn after an assurance from the Minister for P. W. D. that the same scheme was already under the consideration of the Government.

Khan Bahadur Saadullah Khan's resolution to restore "Inams" and other stipends abolished by the Congress Government was opposed by Mr. *Abdur Rashid* and subsequently withdrawn.

Peer Kamran Khan's resolution about settlement in Hazara District was withdrawn.

The resolution about the Peshawar Islamia College was rejected by the House. Moving his resolution, Mr. *Abdur Rashid* protested against anglicising the college staff. He wanted only Indians and Muslims to be appointed as Principal and professors of the college.

VOTING ON BUDGET DEMANDS

24th, AUGUST:—After two days' holiday the Assembly met this morning. As decided by the Party, four Congress M.L.A.s viz. *Dewan Bhanju Ram Gandhi*, Mr. *Tek Chand Dhingra*, *Khan Abdullah Khan* of Potah and *Khan Akbar Ali Khan* came to the Assembly and just avoided disqualification of their membership. They sat in the House for some minutes and then left. *R. B. Mehrchand Khanna*, Dr. *C. C. Ghosh*, *Arbab Abdur Rehman Khan*, and *Syed Qaim Shah* were present in the lobby but did not enter the House.

Quite a stir was caused in the House when *Khan Bahadur Saadullah Khan*, a member of the Muslim League Party, opposed the Government grant for demand under a sub-head 'General Administration.' Speaking, the *Khan Bahadur* demanded that a resolution on Pakistan be moved immediately. He recalled several speeches of the Chief Minister assuring that the Frontier Province stood for Pakistan. Why, the *Khan Bahadur* asked, was now *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan* hesitating to fulfil his promise?

Replying to *Khan Bahadur Saadullah Khan*, *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan*, Chief Minister, thanked him and said so far as the policy of the Muslim Members of

this House was concerned, he assured him that all Muslim members stood for Pakistan.

The cut motion of *Khan Bahadur Saadullah* was defeated and the original demands passed.

Later the House passed all the Government demands for grants put by the Ministers and then adjourned.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS

26th. AUGUST :—When the Assembly meet this morning three members of the Congress Party, *Sardar Asadjan Khan*, *Arbab Abdur Rehman Khan* and *Khan Mohd. Abbas Khan*, ex-Minister, were present in the House but immediately after the Speaker took his seat they quietly walked out. Later *Nawabzada Allah Nawaz Khan*, ex-Deputy Speaker and a member of the Congress Party, appeared on the Opposition benches and left the House after some time.

To-day was the non-official business day and all the five resolutions were moved and withdrawn after proper assurances from the ministers concerned had been given. Mr. *Abdur Rashid Khan*, who was to move the resolution demanding the release of political prisoners, gave a surprise when he announced his decision to withdraw the resolution saying that he had been assured by the provincial Government that the question of the release of politicals was under the serious consideration of the Government.

Speaking on a resolution, *Khan Bahadur Arbab Sherali Khan* urged upon the Government to introduce compulsory primary education in the province. *Khan Saminjan Khan*, Education Minister, admitted that the high rate of crimes in the province were a direct outcome of general poverty and ignorance. He assured the House that education in the province was a national necessity and his government would leave no stone unturned to educate the Pathans. He told the House that he would appoint a committee for this purpose.

INTERPELLATIONS

27th. AUGUST :—To-day was the last day of the Budget session of the Assembly. The whole business was finished in 15 minutes. Before announcing the adjournment of the House 'sine die', *Khan Sardar Bahadur Khan*, Speaker, in a short speech referred to the absence of the Congress Party during the session and said that he was sorry for that. He expressed the hope that the friends of the Congress Party would persuade them to attend the House in the next session.

Replying to a question of *Khan Abdur Rashid Khan* (League) whether (a) *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan* was injured at the time of his arrest, and (b) the Government were prepared to disclose the details of injuries sustained, *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan*, the Chief Minister, said that information in this regard was being collected and would be communicated to the Hon'ble member in due course of time.

Replying to another question of the same member asking for the number of persons arrested under the orders of the Central Government and the Provincial Government, the Chief Minister said that the necessary information was being collected and would be communicated to the member in due course of time.

The House passed the N. W. F. P. Legislative Assembly (Members' Allowance) (Amendment) Bill, 1943 and then adjourned *sine die*.

Laws Passed in 1943

Provincial Acts passed by Legislatures, Governors' Acts, Bills introduced by Provincial Governments and Ordinances promulgated by Governors.

Title of Act or Bill and date of Assent or Introduction in Italics.

The Government of Bengal

The Workmen's Compensation (Bengal Amendment) Act, 1942 (Ben. Act VI of 1942) (November 6, 1942):—To amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 in its application to Bengal to provide for the appointment by the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation from the list of medical referees prepared by the provincial Govt. of official medical referees to whom any medical questions in dispute between employers and workmen may be referred by the said Commissioner for a report and whose report shall be binding on both parties.

The Bengal Land-Revenue Sales (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Ben. Act VII of 1942) (December 3, 1942):—To amend the Bengal Land-Revenue Sales Act, 1859 in order to allow the defaulting holder of an estate or share of an estate, which has been sold under the said Act, an opportunity to apply to the Collector to have the sale set aside on his depositing the dues with the Collector within a specified period.

The Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Second Amendment) Act, 1942 (Ben. Act VIII of 1942) (December 22, 1942):—To amend the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act, 1935 in order to extend the period of five years during which an application can be filed before a Debt Settlement Board, to seven years.

The Calcutta and Suburban Police (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Ben. Act I of 1943) (April 6, 1943):—To amend the Calcutta Police Act, 1866 and the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866 for the purpose of ensuring proper control of seamen's lodging houses and thereby to protect the seamen who take shelter therein.

The Bengal Land-Revenue Sales (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Ben. Act II of 1943) (April 7, 1943):—To amend the Bengal Land-Revenue Sales Act, 1859 in order to provide for the issue of notice of sale of estates to the proprietors individually or where the number of proprietors is more than five to at least five of them by registered post informing them of the particulars of sale.

The Bengal Local Self-Govt. (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Ben. Act III of 1943) (April 10, 1943):—To amend the Bengal

Local Self-Government Act of 1885 in order to provide Government with power to abolish any Local Board without the consent of the District Board.

The Bengal (Rural) Primary Education (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Ben. Act IV of 1943) (April 10, 1943):—To amend the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act, 1930 in order to provide for the representation of ladies in the Central Primary Education Committee and for the representation of special interests in any areas and also to remove certain other minor defects in the said Act.

The Bengal Finance Act, 1943 (Ben. Act V of 1943) (April 12, 1943):—To raise additional revenue for a certain period by varying the rates of the following taxes—(1) Entertainments Tax, leviable under section 3 of the Bengal Amusements Tax Act, 1922; (2) Totalisator Tax, leviable under section 15 of the said Act; (3) Betting Tax, leviable under section 18 of the said Act; and (4) Electricity Duty under section 3 of the Bengal Electricity Duty Act, 1935.

The Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Extending Act, 1943 (Ben. Act VI of 1943) (August 3, 1943):—To extend the operation of the Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1940 for one year more from the 29th May, 1943 pending the introduction of permanent and more comprehensive legislation on the subject.

The Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943 (Ben. Act VII of 1943) (October 23, 1943):—Is to provide Government with powers to collect all genuine vagrants and place them in homes and in these homes to provide (a) food, shelter and clothing for all; (b) medical treatment for the sick; (c) work for the able bodied; and (d) education for the children and also for such adults as appear to be likely to benefit by it.

Bills

The Calcutta and Suburban Police (Amendment) Bill 1942:—To amend the Calcutta Police Act, 1866, and the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866 for prohibiting the use of cycle-rickshaws in Calcutta.

The Bengal Agricultural Income-Tax

Bill, 1943 :—To provide for the imposition of a tax on agricultural income derived from land and buildings situated in Bengal.

The Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Extending Bill, 1943 :—To extend the operation of the Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1940, for one year from the 29th May, 1943.

Government of the Punjab

Bills pending before Assembly

The Sugarcane (Punjab) (Amendment) Bill :—To amend the Indian Sugarcane Act, 1934, in its application to the Punjab with a view to protecting the growers of sugarcane, to provide for the better organisation of cane supplies to sugar factories and to prevent unhealthy competition between them.

The Punjab District Boards Bill :—To repeal the District Boards Act, 1833. The proposed Bill gives full liberty to the Boards to elect non-official Chairman and extends their life to five years. A provision has also been made for prompt discharge of duties by the executive authority.

The Punjab Electricity Duty Bill :—To levy a duty on electrical energy consumed for lights and fans and other appliances.

The Punjab Court of Wards (Amendment) Bill :—1. To make it obligatory for a decree-holder to file a certificate of his having notified his claim under section 26, in order to continue a suit or resume or institute execution proceedings against a ward. 2. To make it clear that no suit or execution proceedings shall be maintainable to set aside or modify the order of a Deputy Commissioner affixing a date for payment of a claim or regulating the order in which claims are to be paid.

The Punjab Trade Employees (Amendment) Bill :—To remove certain difficulties brought to light in the working of the Punjab Trade Employees Act, 1940, by amending the Act, so as to empower the employer to take overtime work from his employees subject to certain restrictions and by omitting sections 11 and 14(2) which empower an employer to impose fine and require notice from the employee before quitting service, respectively.

The Punjab Maternity Benefit Bill :—To regulate the employment of women in factories for certain periods before and after confinement and to provide for the payment of maternity benefit to them.

The Punjab Land Preservation (Chos)

(Amendment) Bill :—To apply the principles of the Land Preservation (Chos) Act II of 1900, to the whole Province and to empower the Government to require landowners to take positive measures necessary to arrest erosion, failing which the Government shall have the power of executing works themselves.

The Punjab Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Bill :—To provide for the licensing of ginning and pressing factories in order to eradicate the malpractices of mixing, watering, adulteration with seed etc., prevailing among cotton producers.

Legislative Measures passed by the Punjab Assembly from Oct. 28 1942 to Oct. 11, 1943

The Press and Registration of Books (Punjab) Amendment Bill (November 3, 1942) :—To remove doubts arising out of the absence of time limit for the validity of declarations under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, and making the filling of a fresh declaration obligatory if a press is restarted, after having ceased to function.

The Punjab General Sales Tax (Second Amendment) Bill. (November 3, 1942) :—To amend the Punjab General Sales Tax Act, 1941, so that the tax shall become payable by the dealer in the year immediately following the year for which it has been charged.

The Punjab Land Preservation (Chos) (Amendment) Bill. (November 3, 1942) :—To extend the Punjab Land Preservation (Chos) (Amend.) Act, 1900, so as to bring the whole of Kangra District within the scope of its application.

The Punjab Local Authorities (War Services) Bill (March 26, 1943) :—To remove such disqualifications as may arise from the employment on war service of members or office holders of local authorities.

The Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax (Validation of Lists) Bill (March 26, 1943) :—To validate certain draft valuation lists prepared under section 8(1) of the Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax Act, 1940, before the expiry of the full period of 30 days allowed for the delivery of returns.

The Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax (Amendment) Bill. (March 26, 1943) :—To set at rest doubts by providing that the term "local authority" as defined in Section 2(b) of the Punjab Urban Immovable Property Tax Act, 1940, includes municipal committees superseded under Section 258 of the Punjab Municipal Act, 1911,

The Punjab Urban Rent Restriction

(Amendment) Bill. (March 26, 1943) :—To make it clear that the Punjab Urban Rent Restriction Act 1941, is enforceable in a municipality, even when its committee has been superseded and to set at rest all doubts in that connection.

*The Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Lands (Amendment) Bill (March 26, 1943) :—*To amend the Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Act, 1938, so as

(i) to permit an officer other than the Commissioner to be invested with the latter's powers ;

(ii) to give the right of appeal before the Financial Commissioner to the party against whom the Commissioner accepts an appeal and

(iii) to recognise clearly the revisional jurisdiction of the Financial Commissioner.

Government of Orissa

*The Orissa Local Authorities Extension of Office Act 1942 (Orissa Act III of 1942) (December 24, 1942) :—*To provide for extension of the term of office of Local Authorities in the province during the continuance of present hostilities and for a period of six months thereafter.

*The Orissa Legislative Authorities Extension of Office Act 1942 (Orissa Act III. of 1942) (December 27, 1942) :—*To prevent membership of any of His Majesty's Forces or employment directly concerned with the present war being a disqualification for membership of the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

*The Orissa Tenancy (Amendment) Act 1943 (Orissa Act IV of 1943) (March 27, 1943) :—*To place the Sub-Deputy Collectors on the same footing as Deputy Collectors in regard to trying of suits under the Orissa Tenancy Act, 1943.

*The Bihar and Orissa State Aid to Industries (Orissa Amendment) Act, 1943 (Orissa Act V of 1943) (March 31, 1943) :—*To ensure quick disposal of applications for State aid so that Director of Development may sanction small loans without reference to the meetings of the Board of Industries.

*The Orissa Stamp (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Orissa Act VI of 1943) (April 10, 1943) :—*To unify the rates of Stamp duty chargeable in the province.

*The Orissa Weights and Measures Act, 1943 (Orissa Act VII of 1943) (April 22, 1943) :—*To fix a scale of standard measures with reference to the standard weights for the province.

*The Bihar and Orissa Municipal (Orissa Amendment) Act, 1943 (Orissa Act XI of 1943) (July 24, 1943) :—*To exempt Dharmasalas, where pilgrims are allowed accommodation for limited periods

free of charge from payment of water, lighting, latrine and drainage taxes.

*The Utkal University Act 1943 (Orissa Act XIII of 1943), (August 2, 1943) :—*To establish and incorporate a University in the province.

Bills

*The Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land in Orissa) Bill, 1942 (November 24, 1942) :—*To give Hindu women the same rights in respect of agricultural land as they enjoy under the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1937 in respect of property other than agricultural lands.

Government of Assam

*The Assam (Temporarily-Settled Districts) Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act I of 1943). (March 26, 1943) :—*To amend the Assam (Temporarily-Settled Districts) Tenancy Act, 1935 in order to remove difficulty in realising rents and in paying Government revenue by Managers of lands pertaining to temples or other religious institutions, etc.

*The Assam Forest (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act II of 1943) (March 30, 1943) :—*Further to amend the Assam Forest Regulation 1891 in order to remove unnecessary harassment and inconvenience and to penalise any Forest officer or Police Officer who vexatiously and maliciously arrests any person on the pretence that he is suspected in any forest offence or otherwise as provided by Section 60 (1) of the Regulation.

*The Assam Land and Revenue Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act III of 1943) (March 30, 1943) :—*Further to amend the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation 1886 in order to empower Government to frame rules for the custody of attached movable property.

*The Goalpara Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act IV of 1943). (May 29, 1943) :—*Further to amend the Goalpara Tenancy Act 1929 to provide relief for all classes of tenants by reducing the rate of interest, abolition of damages on arrears of rent and facilitating the division of tenancies and distribution of rent etc.

*The Sylhet Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act V of 1943). (May 29, 1943) :—*To amend the Sylhet Tenancy Act, 1936 in order to provide relief for all classes of tenants by reducing the rate of interest, abolition of damages on arrears of rent and facilitating the division of tenancies and distribution of rents, etc.

*The Assam Money Lenders' (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act VI of 1943). (June 26, 1943) :—*To amend the Assam Money Lenders' Act, 1934 with a view to give further relief to the debtors.

The Assam Finance Act, 1943 (Act VII of 1943). (July 2, 1943):—To fix the rates at which agricultural income shall be taxed under the Assam Agricultural Income-tax Act, 1939.

The Shillong (Attachment of Salaries) Act, 1943 (Act VIII of 1943). (July 2, 1943):—To amend the Rules for the Administration of Justice in the British portion of Shillong, in order to secure uniformity in the matter of attachment of salaries.

The Assam Court of Wards (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act IX of 1943). (July 16, 1943):—To amend the Bengal Court of Wards Act 1879 in its application to Assam, to make provisions of Section 10C of the Court of Wards Act 1879 applicable in respect of execution of decrees or orders passed by the High Court in regard to all pending suits or proceedings.

The Assam Court of Wards (Delegation of Powers) Act, 1943 (Act X of 1943). (July 16, 1943):—To amend the Bengal Court of Wards Act 1879, in its application to Assam, in order to enable the Collector to delegate such of those powers as the Court approves to a Special Officer appointed to assist him in the management of the Estates under the Court of Wards.

The Assam Legislative Chambers (Members' Emoluments) (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Act XI of 1943) (July 16, 1943):—Further to amend the Assam Legislative Chambers (Members' Emoluments) Act, 1938, in order to fix the daily allowance for members of the Legislature in accordance with the upper category of First Grade officers.

The Shillong (Execution of Decrees) Act, 1943. (Act XII of 1943) (September 14, 1943):—To provide the Civil Courts having Jurisdiction over the British portion of Shillong with the power to send decrees for execution to the Civil Courts having jurisdiction in the Khasi States, and also power to execute decrees sent to them for execution by the Civil Courts having jurisdiction in the Khasi States.

Government of Sind

The Bombay Entertainments Duty (Sind Amendment) Act, No. I of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Increased the rate of entertainment duty to 2% of the payment for admission and altered the method of levy by prescribing recovery of the duty at 20% of the gross amount received by the keeper of the entertainment.

The Bombay Finance (Sind Amendment) Act, No. II of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Increased the rate of electricity duty and discontinued certain exemption

and increased the stamp duty on certain classes of instruments executed in the City of Karachi.

The Ratodero Municipality (Extension of Term) Act, No. III of 1943 (March 25, 1943):—Extended the term of the Ratodero Municipality by six months so as to allow time for holding the election.

The Karachi Joint Water Board Act, No. IV of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Constituted a Joint Water Board, to implement the Haleji Water Storage Scheme for supplying a permanent source of water to supplement the existing supply for the City of Karachi.

The Bombay Weights and Measures (Sind Amendment) Act No. V of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—It made an enabling provision that a trader or agent in possession of a weight, measure or weighing or measuring instrument should be presumed, until the contrary is proved, to have been in possession of it for use for trade.

The Sind Consumption of Intoxicants Restriction (Amendment) Act, No. VI of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Provided that appeals from the orders passed under section 21 by the Collector should lie to the Revenue Commissioner and by the Assistant or Deputy Collector to the Collector.

The Sind Opium Smoking (Amendment) Act, No. VII of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Removed the limitation imposed by section 31 that the payment of rewards for detection of offences under the Act should be made available out of the fines.

The Bombay Village Sanitation (Sind Amendment) Act, No. VIII of 1943 (March 26, 1943):—Validated the nominations by Government in certain cases where the nominations at the general elections were less than the seats allotted.

The Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Sind Extension to Agricultural Land) Act, No. IX of 1943 (March 30, 1943):—Extended the provisions of the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, 1937, and the Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Amendment) Act, 1938, to agricultural lands in the Province with retrospective effect restoring the presumed intention of the Legislature nullified by the Federal Court of India in their decision in case No. 1 of 1941.

The Bombay Land Revenue Code and the Government Occupants (Sind) Amendment Act, No. X of 1943 (March 30, 1943):—Permitted the occupants to lease or mortgage their lands held by them on restricted tenure under the Land Revenue Code or Government

Occupants (Sind) Act, 1938, for a period not exceeding ten years without the sanction of the Collector.

The Bombay Irrigation (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XI of 1943 (March 30, 1943) :—Postponed (i) the date for the recovery of water-courses expenses without interest from the due date and (ii) the recovery of instalments towards such expenses without charging penal interest.

The Sind Medical Practitioners' (Repeal) Act, No. XII of 1943 (April 8, 1943) :—Repealed the Sind Medical Practitioners' Act, 1940, regulating the qualifications and providing for the registration of practitioners of Indian systems of medicine.

The Bombay Primary Education (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XIII of 1943 (April 8, 1943) :—Fixed the minimum age for admission to primary schools at six years;

Made it eligible for ex-Chairmen and ex-Presidents for election to the Provincial Board of Primary Education; Prescribed some educational qualifications for the representatives of women, minorities and backward communities on the School Board;

Made some other unimportant changes in the Act of 1923.

The Sind Legislative Assembly Members' Salaries and Allowances Act, No. XIV of 1943 (April 8, 1943) :—Supplied the omission of not providing for the return fare after the close of the session or meeting;

Put some limitations on the subsistence allowance during the period of adjournment.

The Sind Nurses, Midwives, Health Visitors and Dais Registration (Amendment) Act, No. XV of 1943 (April 8, 1943) :—Substituted the expression "trained-dai" into "assistant midwife" and omitted the provision with respect to "nurse-dai."

Withdrew the application of the Act in certain areas; and

Made changes in the constitution of the Council.

The Bombay Co-operative Societies (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XVI of 1943 (April 10, 1943) :—Introduced the definition of "Financing Bank" in the Act and provided inspection of books of societies by the Financing Banks;

Made special provision for membership of Resource Societies;

Made provision on the lines of the Arbitration Act empowering Registrar to modify or correct an award without affecting the decision on the matter referred to arbitration;

Gave finality to certain orders passed

by Government in appeal or revision; and

Gave arbitration awards or orders of liquidator status of a decree to enable to proceed against persons leaving British India and going to Indian States.

Enabled the appointment of a single person to administer the affairs of a suspended society.

The Sind (Police) Riots Force Act, No. XVII of 1943 (April 15, 1943) :—Provided for the constitution of a force on a semi-military lines.

The Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XVIII of 1943 (April 18, 1943) :—Made it an offence for admixture of cotton produce of two or more seasons.

The Sind Agriculturists Relief (Amendment) Act No. XIX of 1943 (April 23, 1943) :—Amended the definition of an 'agriculturist' by increasing the limits of the qualifying holding; Took away the period of 90 days provided for application for amendment of a decree and revived applications dismissed on that account. It provided for one right of appeal against order passed under section 13.

The Bombay Abkari (Sind Amendment) Act No. XX of 1943 (May 15, 1943) :—Empowered Government to issue orders in respect of grant of licences and to revise orders passed by the Abkari Officers; Made a provision similar to that contained in the Madras Prohibition Supplementary Act.

The Sind Legislative Assembly (Prevention of Disqualification) (War Service) Act, No. XXI of 1943 (July 17, 1943) :—Provided that holding of offices certified by Governor to be offices concerned with the prosecution of the present war will not involve disqualification under section 69 of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Temporary Postponement of Execution of Decrees and Orders Act, No. XXII of 1943 (July 15, 1943) :—Provided that owing to large tracts of lands having been damaged by floods on the right bank of river Indus and cultivation affected by Hur trouble and damage to crop by locusts execution of Civil court decrees and orders under the Co-operative Societies Act, 1925, be postponed up to the 31st January, 1944.

The Bombay Weights and Measures (Sind Second Amendment) Act, No. XXIII of 1943 (July 17, 1943) :—Restricted within reasonable limits the scope of the presumption of possession for use for trade drawn under the Explanation added to section 34 by Sind Act No. V of 1943.

The Bombay District Municipal and

Local Boards (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XXIV of 1943 (July 17, 1943):—Empowered the President or Vice-President to call a meeting of a Committee when the Chairman of that committee was absent from the local limits for a period exceeding 15 days;

Empowered Government to invest a District Municipality with power to control effectively the nuisance caused by milch cattle stables;

Removed certain restrictions on a town being declared as a notified area.

The Special Commissioner's Powers Act, No. XXV of 1943 (July 17, 1943):—Provided for the appointment of an officer as Special Commissioner to maintain effective control of law and order in the Hur area after the withdrawal of martial law and for investing that officer with the powers of a Commissioner under the Bombay District Police Act.

The Bombay Local Boards (Sind Amendment) Act, No. XXVI of 1943 (July 17, 1943):—Empowered the local boards to contribute a sum not exceeding Rs. 300 in a year to the Wakf Administration Fund under the Mussalman Wakf Act No. XLII of 1923.

BILLS

The Sind Money-Lenders Bill, No. VII of 1943:—Provides for the regulation of money-lending transactions in the Province by registration and licensing of money-lenders and regulating the accounts.

The Sind Alienation of Agricultural Land (Restriction) Bill, No. XVIII of 1943:—Proposes to impose certain restrictions on alienation of agricultural land with the object that small landholders should preserve their holdings and that transfer of land from agricultural to non-agricultural classes should be restricted within certain limits.

The Sind Rat Pest Bill, No. XX of 1943 (published in Sind Government Gazette, dated June 17, 1943):—Proposes to carry out the operations of rat-killing in the Province for a period of five years to remove the evil of rat-pest.

The Bombay Town Planning (Sind Amendment) Bill, No. XXVII of 1943 (Published in Sind Government Gazette, June 24, 1943):—Proposes to remove certain defects in the Bombay Town Planning Act which came to notice in the working of the Act.

The Sind Deti Leti (Amendment) Bill, No. XXVIII of 1943 (Published in Sind Government Gazette, June 24, 1943):—Proposes to remove certain defects in the Sind Deti Leti Act observed in the working of the Act.

The Sind Hakims and Vaidas Bill,

No. XXIX of 1943 (Published in Sind Government Gazette, July 15, 1943):—Provides for the registration of qualified Hakims and Vaidas in the Province to raise the standard of practice in the Indian systems of medicine and formation of a Council for that purpose.

The Sind Boll-Worm Bill No. XXX of 1943 (Published in Sind Government Gazette, August 19, 1943):—Provides for the eradication of Boll-worm insectpest causing damage to cotton crop in the Province.

The City of Karachi Municipal (Amendment) Bill, No. XXXI of 1943 (Published in Sind Government Gazette, September 15, 1943):—Provides for reducing matter for publication in the Sind Government Gazette of quarterly accounts of the Karachi Municipal Corporation as a measure of economy.

Government of Bombay

The Bombay District Municipal Local Boards and Municipal Boroughs (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bom. XIX of 1942), November 6, 1942:—To remove the deadlock resulting from the detention of presidents and vice-presidents of certain local bodies in prison under the Defence of India Rules by empowering the Collector in such contingencies to authorise a member of the local body or the Chief Officer to perform all functions of the President or Vice-Presidents.

The life of the Act is up to April 1, 1944.

The Bombay Ferries (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bom. XXI of 1942), (December 2, 1942):—To institute better control over vessels plying on any river, stream, creek, tank, lake or other collections of water affording passage for a vessel so as to prevent recurrence of accidents like the boating tragedy that occurred at Surat in August 1938 as far as possible.

The Bombay Power Alcohol and Petroleum Act, 1942 (Bombay XXIII of 1942), (December 17, 1942):—To regulate the manufacture of power alcohol and for the admixture of power alcohol with petrol for use as motor fuel in the Province of Bombay and for certain other purposes.

The Coroners (Bombay Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bombay XXV of 1942), (January 4, 1943):—To preclude inquests by the Coroner in cases of deaths resulting from enemy action as this procedure is likely to cause great inconvenience and delay in the disposal of bodies.

The Bombay Small Holders Relief (Second Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bom. XXVI of 1942) [January 6, 1943]:—To protect persons in the Defence Services of the Crown who cannot cultivate lands

themselves from eviction on account of subletting of the lands in contravention of the conditions of their respective leases.

The Bombay Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bom. XXVII of 1942) (January 6, 1943):—To safeguard the interests of persons in the Defence services of the Crown whether they be landlords or protected tenants. Section 23 and Section 5, sub-section (2) (d) of the Bombay Tenancy Act, 1939, intended to safeguard the interest of protected tenants and landlords operate harshly against persons joining the military naval and air services of the Crown during the War.

The Bombay Land Improvement Scheme Act 1942 (Bom. XXVIII of 1942) (January 25, 1943):—To provide for the making and execution of schemes relating to the construction of tanks, embankments and other works, the prohibition and control of grazing for the purpose of preservation of soil erosion, improvement of water supply and other matters in order thereby to protect and improve lands and crops in the Province of Bombay.

The Bombay Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Bom. XXIX of 1942) (February 11, 1943):—To legalise the practice mentioned below. Members taking loans from salary earners' co-operative societies sign an agreement authorising the officer disbursing the salary to deduct from it the amount of instalment due on the loan and to remit the amount deducted to the society. It is also usual, by the same agreement, to undertake not to revoke the authority thus given so long as any part of the loan and interest thereon remains unpaid.

The Bombay Co-operative Societies Act, 1925, did not contain any provision in this behalf.

The Bombay Cotton Control Act, 1942 (Bom. XXX of 1942) (March 2, 1943):—To maintain the quality and reputation of the cotton grown in certain areas, and for that purpose in these areas, to fix the variety of cotton to be grown, to prohibit the cultivation of any variety of the prohibited variety of cotton with any other cotton and to prohibit or restrict the possession or use of, or trade in the prohibited variety of cotton, in the best interest of the growers of cotton in these areas in the Province, the cotton trade and economic prosperity of the Province.

1943

The Bombay Rationing Preparatory Measures Act, 1943 (Bom. I of 1943).

January 8, 1943):—To provide for the (numbering of premises and collecting information about persons as measures preparatory to the rationing of articles or things essential to the life of the community.

The City of Bombay Municipal (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Bom. II of 1943). (March 3, 1943):—To invest the Municipality with the power to control the keeping and rearing of dogs on private premises by providing for licensing of dogs kept in the City.

The Bombay Finance Act, 1943 (Bom. III of 1943) (March 30, 1943):—To extend the life of the Act of 1932 by one more year.

The Bombay Rent Restriction (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Bom. IV of 1943) March 30, 1943):—To extend the life of the Act of 1939 by one more year.

The Bombay Small Holders Relief (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Bom. V of 1943) March 30, 1943):—To extend the life of the Act of 1938 by two more years.

The Bombay Prevention of Prostitution (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Bom. VII of 1943) (May 6, 1943):—To make landlo de punishable for the repeated and continuous letting out of their premises to prostitutes and to enable the Police to clear specific areas effectually.

The City of Bombay Municipal Corporation (Extension of Term) (Amendment) Act, 1943, (Bom. VIII of 1943). (June 11, 1943):—To extend the life of the Corporation for a further period of one year, i.e. till the 1st April, 1945.

(In view of Section 93 conditions in this province, no Bill has been introduced since November 13, 1943).

Government of Madras

The Madras City Municipal and District Municipalities (Amendment) Act, 1942, (Madras Act XXVII of 1942). November 22, 1942):—To empower the municipal executive authority to require owners of buildings to construct house drains not only where a public drain or outfall has actually been provided but also in cases where one is about to be provided or is in the process of construction.

The Madras Hereditary Village-Officers (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXVIII of 1942). (November 22, 1942):—To provide that the ordinary presumption applicable to service inams namely, that they consist only of the assignment of revenue, should not extend to inam lands actually in the possession of artisans on or after the 14th July, 1942 that the nature of the inam should be determined in each case

with reference to the facts thereof and that the minor heir to a village artisan officer may sue at any time within three years from the date of attaining his majority.

The Madras University (Fourth Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXIX of 1942), (December 5, 1942):—To give power to the Syndicate of the University of Madras to continue to recognise constituent colleges as such, notwithstanding their removal to places outside the limits of the University on account of the situation created by the War.

The Madras Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXX of 1942) (December 10, 1942):—To enhance the maximum penalty for illicit distillation and distribution of liquor.

The Madras City Police (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXI of 1942) (December 7, 1942):—To make Deputy Commissioners of Police *ex officio* Presidency Magistrates for certain limited purposes.

The Andhra University (Second Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXII of 1942), (December 17, 1942):—To make certain amendments to the Andhra University Act, 1925, for the purpose of removing difficulties experienced in working the Act.

The Madras University (Fifth Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXIII of 1942), (December 17, 1942):—To enable the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University to hold elections to University bodies in anticipation of vacancies arising by efflux of time not earlier than two months from the date on which they arise.

The Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXIV of 1942) (December 12, 1942):—To provide that a person accused of a minor offence under the principal Act may appear before the court by pleader instead of in person or may plead guilty of the offence by a letter addressed to the court remitting at the same time the sum specified by it.

The Madras Prohibition (Second Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXV of 1942) (December 28, 1942):—To exempt from the provisions of the Madras Prohibition Act, 1937, troops and members of medical and other staffs attached to them, who are stationed in, or pass through prohibition areas, as well as canteen keepers and others duly empowered to supply liquor and intoxicating drugs to them.

The Madras City Municipal and District Municipalities (Second Amendment)

Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXVI of 1942) (December 30, 1942):—To empower the Government to frame rules for the valuation of Government and railway buildings as well as of certain other buildings for the purpose of assessing them to property tax under the principal Acts.

The Madras Cotton Control (Amendment) Act 1942 (Madras Act XXXVII of 1942) (December 29, 1942):—To enhance the penalty for certain offences against the principal Act and to provide for the custody and examination of cotton seized under that Act and for the destruction of 'pulichai' cotton (a prohibited variety) or of cotton mixed with 'pulichai' cotton.

The Madras Municipalities (Third Amendment) Act, 1942 (Madras Act XXXVIII of 1942) (January 29, 1943):—To amend the principal Act with a view to remove the difficulties encountered in working the Act and to improve the municipal administration.

The Madras Sales of Motor Spirit Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act I of 1943) (January 9, 1943):—To provide for the transfer of the administration of the Madras Sales of Motor Spirit Taxation Act, 1939, from the Land Revenue to the Commercial Taxes Department.

The Madras Electricity Duty (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act II of 1943) (January 22, 1943):—To amend the principal Act so as to bring it into strict accord with the provisions of section 154-A of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Legal Practitioners (Madras Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act III of 1943) (February 6, 1943):—To empower the High Court to make an order as to costs in cases of professional misconduct by legal practitioners and to provide for the more effective suppression of the touting evil.

The Madras Medical Registration (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act IV of 1943), (February 13, 1943):—To provide for the constitution of an Executive Committee of the Madras Medical Council, to raise the fee levied for registration of medical practitioners from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, to levy a fee of Rs. 5 for the registration of practitioners registered elsewhere in British India or for the registration of a registered practitioner under a new name and to define the functions of a Committee of the Council while making an enquiry under the principal Act.

The Presidency Towns Insolvency (Madras Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act V of 1943) (February 13, 1943):—

To make the Official Assignee and his establishment part of the staff of the High Court and to authorize the transfer to the account of the Provincial Government of all moneys likely to be surplus in the hands of the Official Assignee without impairing in any way the rights of persons having claims against those moneys.

The Madras District Municipalities (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act VI of 1943). (February 22, 1943):—To amend section 84 (1) of the principal Act so as to enable municipal councils to levy the property tax on lands used exclusively for agricultural purposes at a rate higher than that at which property tax is levied by them on buildings.

The Madras Court of Small Causes (Validation of Proceedings) Act, 1943 (Madras Act VII of 1943). (February 28, 1943):—To validate the proceedings and acts of the Court of Small Causes of Madras during the period from the 13th April, 1942 to the 13th June, 1942 (both days inclusive) when the Court was located outside the Presidency-town of Madras.

The Madras Finance Act, 1943 (Madras Act, VIII of 1943). (March 14, 1943):—To reduce the General Sales Tax payable for the year 1943-44. The Act has since been repealed by the Madras Finance (No. 2) Act, 1943.

The Madras Debt Conciliation (Amendment) Act 1943 (Madras Act IX of 1943) (March 12, 1943):—To provide that where a creditor does not furnish to the Debt Conciliation Board a statement of the debt due to him by a debtor as required by section 10 (1), the debt itself is not discharged but that the creditor should challenge the accuracy of the particulars as to the debt given in the debtor's application.

The Annamalai University (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act X of 1943) (May 8, 1943):—To amend the principal Act so as to enable the Vice-Chancellor to hold anticipatory elections to University bodies not earlier than two months from the date of their reconstitution.

The Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Act 1943 (Madras Act XI of 1943). (June 8, 1943):—To amend section 91 of the principal Act so as to prohibit the Corporation of Madras from considering any proposals for the amendment of the establishment schedule of the Corporation of Madras except at the instance of its Commissioner.

The Indian Lunacy (Madras Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act XII of 1943). (May 17, 1943):—To provide also

for the temporary discharge of lunatics who have been detained under the provisions of section 7 or 10 of the principal Act when such discharge is necessary in the interest of the health of the lunatics.

The Madras Local Boards (Amendment) Act 1943 (Madras Act XIII of 1943). (June 25, 1943):—To make specific provision in section 63 of the principal Act for the resumption of control over endowments which have been transferred to district boards under that section and also to provide that the rent value of lands in proprietary estates should be fixed once in three years.

The Madnapalle Tuberculosis Sanatorium (Regulation of Buildings) Act, 1943 (Madras Act XIV of 1943). (June 27, 1943):—To provide for the control of the construction of buildings in the neighbourhood of the Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Madanapalle, and for the exclusion, modification or restriction of enactments relating to public health from or in such neighbourhood.

The Madras Agriculturists Relief (Amendment) Act, 1943 (Madras Act XV of 1943 (August 4, 1943):—To validate certain rules under the Act enabling the parties concerned to apply to the court for a declaration of the amount of the debt as scaled down due by the debtor and to prefer an appeal against such declaration and certain orders of the court.

The Madras Stamp (Increase of Duties) Act, 1943 (Madras Act XVI of 1943 (September 22, 1943):—To increase the taxation leviable in this Province as an anti-inflationary measure. The stamp duty payable has been doubled in the case of certain instruments which are exclusively or principally connected with business and raised by fifty per cent in certain other cases.

The Madras Finance (No. 2) Act, 1943 (Madras Act XVII of 1943) (September 8, 1943):—(i) To amend the Madras Betting Tax Act, 1935, so as to raise the maximum of the totalizator tax and the tax on bets made with bookmakers from 4 and 6½ per cent; and (ii) to amend the Madras General Sales Tax Act, 1939, with effect from 1-10-1943, so as to restore the original rate of Rs. 5 a month in the case of dealers whose turnover is between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 20,000 and to raise the rate to 1 per cent of the turnover where it exceeds Rs. 20,000.

The Madras Irrigation Works (Repairs, Improvement and Construction) Act 1943 (Madras Act XVIII of 1943) (September 29, 1943):—To authorize the

Government to repair and improve any existing irrigation works and to construct new irrigation works on private lands (the cost being met by the Government in the first instance and recovered later from the person concerned) and also to supply water from Government irrigation works and to charge fees for such supply.

The Madras Pawnbrokers Bill, 1940 :—To regulate and control the business of pawnbrokers in the province of Madras.

The Madras Village Panchayats Bill 1940 :—To make better provision in a separate enactment for the administration of village affairs by panchayats.

The Madras Local Boards (Second Amendment) Bill, 1941 :—To remove panchayats from the scope of the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920 and confine the operation of the Act to district boards and to make certain other amendments to the Act either for the purpose of removing certain difficulties encountered in working the Act or for the purpose of improving the administration of district boards.

The Madras Industrial Dispute Bill, 1942 :—To make provision for the promotion of peaceful and amicable settlement of Industrial disputes by conciliation and arbitration.

The Criminal Tribes (Madras Amendment) Bill 1943 :—To make certain amendments to the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924, which are considered necessary by the experience gained so far in the working of the Act and to liberalize the provisions of the Act wherever possible.

The Madras Restriction of Habitual Offenders Bill, 1943 :—To provide for the application of the provisions of the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924, to individual habitual offenders, so that where necessary, restrictions may be placed on the movements of such offenders or a duty laid on them to notify their residences, etc., as provided in that Act.

The Madras Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To amend the principal Act with a view to facilitate the recovery of sums due to co-operative societies in Orissa from members of such societies residing in this Province.

The Madras Proprietary Estates' Village Service and Hereditary Village-officers (Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To allow the minor, registered as heir to a village-officer under the two principal Acts, a period of five years from the termination of his war service to qualify himself for the office.

The Tambaram Tuberculosis Sanatorium (Regulation of Building) Bill, 1943 :—To provide for the control of

the construction of buildings in the neighbourhood of the Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Tambaram, and for the exclusion, modification or restriction of enactments relating to public health from or in such neighbourhood.

The Annamalai University (Second Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To amend the principal Act so as to secure the more efficient working of the Act, the main charges being abolition of the Academic Council, alteration of the constitution of the Senate so as to make it a more representative body, grant of effective powers to the Vice-Chancellor, etc.

The Madras Public Health (Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To amend the Madras Public Health Act, 1939, for the purpose of making separate provision for the treatment and control of leprosy, which is now regulated, along with other infectious diseases, by the provisions of Chapter VII of the Act.

The Madras Estates Land (Temporary Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To provide for the temporary assignment, subject to certain conditions, of waste lands situated in estates for periods ranging from 3 to 5 years for the cultivation of food crops during the present emergency.

The Andhra University (Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To remove the prohibition imposed by Section 26 (c) of the Andhra University (Second Amendment) Act, 1942, in the case of vacancies in seats on the Syndicate and the Finance Committee to which nominations are made by the Chancellor.

The Madras University (Amendment) Bill, 1943 :—To enable the Madras University to institute, maintain and manage colleges and laboratories of its own outside the limits of the University and to confer degrees and other academic distinctions on students who have perused approved courses of study in such colleges and laboratories and passed the prescribed examinations.

Govt of United Provinces

The United Provinces Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1942, (December 4, 1942) :—To remove the hardship felt by the smaller landlords, permanent tenure holders and under-proprietors on joining the military, naval or air services of the Crown by not being able to let out their *khudkasht* without allowing the tenants to require hereditary rights.

The United Provinces Famine Relief Fund (Amendment) Act, 1943, (January 22, 1943) :—To provide that if in the subsequent year the balance in the Famine Relief Fund has reached the limit of 55 lakhs, the deficiency occurring

in the previous year need not be made good.

The United Provinces District Boards (Amendment) Act, 1943, (February 26, 1943):—To enable the district boards suffering considerable decrease in the income from local rate to increase the local rate.

The Court Fees (United Provinces) (Amendment) Act, 1943, (March 2, 1943):—To delete the provision made by the Court Fees (United Provinces Amendment) Act 1941, for the fees to be paid in the United Provinces in respect of certain applications and appeals under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (IV of 1939) as the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 1942, (XX of 1942) overrode the provisions of Clause (b) of Section 8 of the Court Fees (United Provinces Amendment) Act, 1941.

The United Provinces Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1943, (April 3, 1943):—To remove the difficulties felt by persons in the military, naval or air services of the Crown holding land jointly with others in sub-letting of holdings and to exempt such persons from the penalty provided for in Sub-Section (1) of Section 171 of the U. P. Tenancy Act, 1939.

The United Provinces Tenancy (Second Amendment) Act, 1943, (April 7, 1943):—To allow Government to fix from time to time the sale price of receipt books kept for sale to land-holders for use in granting receipts for every payment made to them on account of rents of sayars, at a rate not exceeding the cost of production.

The United Provinces Maintenance and Restoration of Order (Indemnity) Act, 1943, (April 9, 1943):—To protect Government servants who in connection with the movement designed to paralyse Government launched by the Congress party in August, 1942, were obliged, in some instances, by the imperative need of restoring order in the interests of the defence of India, to take measures not covered by a provision of law.

The United Provinces Entertainment and Betting Tax (War Surcharge) Act, 1943, (July 7, 1943):—To empower Government to impose a surcharge to a maximum of one hundred per cent on the present rate of tax to check inflationary tendencies.

The Court Fees (United Provinces Amendment) Act, 1943, (July 8, 1943):—To enable Government to impose a surcharge of approximately 25% on all court fees leviable under the Court Fees Act (VII of 1870) with a view to combat inflation.

The Indian Stamp (United Provinces

Amendment) Act, 1943, (July 18, 1943):—To enable Government to impose a surcharge of approximately 25 per cent on all stamp duties leviable under the Indian Stamp Act (II of 1899) with a view to combat inflation.

United Provinces Encumbered Estates (Amendment) Act, 1943, (September 7, 1943):—Empowering the Commissioners instead of the Board of Revenue to decide the appeals under the United Provinces Encumbered Estates Act, 1934, with a view to expedite the disposal of cases under the Act and to enable the Board to correct mistakes, etc., in the liquidation awards declared final by the Collectors.

Government of Central Provinces and Berar

From November 1, 1942, to September 30, 1943

The Berar Land Revenue Code (Amendment) Act, 1942, (I of 1943), (December 29, 1942):—To extend the term of "settlement" in Berar from 40 years to 45 years so as to avoid the necessity of starting settlement operations during the present period.

The Central Provinces and Berar Postponement of General Elections to Local Boards (Amendment) Act, 1942, (XV of 1942), (December 31, 1942):—To provide for the postponement of General Elections to Local Boards until the termination of the present war and for such period thereafter as the Provincial Government may, by notification, direct.

The Central Provinces and Berar Postponement of Elections (Municipal Committees and Notified Area Committees) (Amendment) Act, 1942, (XVI of 1942), (December 31, 1942):—To provide for the postponement of General Elections in Urban areas until the termination of the present war and for such period thereafter as the Provincial Government may, by notification direct.

Government of Bihar

The Bihar Municipal (Temporary Extension of Term of Office), Act, 1942, (Bihar Act IX of 1942, (November 26, 1942):—To secure power to postpone for the duration of the war all general elections in municipalities by extending the term of office of municipal commissioners and other officers of municipalities.

The Bihar Public Demands Recovery (Amendment) Act, 1943, (Bihar Act I of 1943), (March 11, 1943):—To provide for the recovery as a public demand of arrear dues payable under the Dehri-

Sasaram Electrification Scheme and Dehri-Sasaram Lift Irrigation Scheme.

The Bihar Refund of Cess (Amendment) Act, 1943, (Bihar Act II of 1943), (March 12, 1943):—To allow refunds of cess to landlords in respect of rents reduced under the Bihar Tenancy Act, 1885, the Champaran Agrarian (Amendment) Act, 1938, the Kosi Diara (Reduction of Settled Rents) Act, 1939, and the Cess Act, 1880, where the effect of the operation of these Acts has been to reduce the money rent of a holding below the figure that was adopted as the basis of the last cess revaluation of the estate.

The Bihar Maintenance and Restoration of Order (Indemnity) Act, 1943, (Bihar Act III of 1943), (April 9, 1943):—To afford protection to officers of Government who were, during the civil disturbances of August, 1942, obliged by the imperative need of restoring order, in the interests of the defence of India, to take measures not covered by a provision of law.

The Bihar Sugar Factories Control (Amendment) Act 1943, (Bihar Act IV of 1943), (July 16, 1943):—To give statutory recognition to the sugarcane varieties advisory Committee and to empower Government to declare that particular varieties of plant cane or ratoon cane are unsuitable for use by factories in specified areas.

The Patna City Municipality (Emergency Assessment and Recovery of Taxes) Act 1943, (Bihar Act V of 1943), (August 6, 1943):—To remove the difficulties caused by the destruction during the civil disturbances of August, 1942, of a part of the records of the Patna City Municipality, by empowering municipal commissioners to reconstruct both the arrear and current demands in a suitable manner.

The Bihar Village Collective Responsibility Act, 1943, (Bihar Act VI of 1943), (August 17, 1943):—To give statutory recognition to the organisation of village patrols acting under headmen appointed by the District Magistrate for the guarding of lines of communications and Government property which were extensively damaged during the civil disturbances of August, 1942.

The Bihar Criminal Law (Industrial Areas), Amendment Act 1943, (Bihar Act VII of 1943), (September 1, 1943):—To check the thefts of certain articles,

particularly iron and steel, from mines, railways and other industrial places which have become very common in Bihar.

Govt. of N. W. F. Province

The N.-W. F. P. Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To authorise the Provincial Government to prescribe the form of token and for the issue thereof and their duplicates.

The N.-W. F. P. Village Council (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To authorise the Provincial Government to extend the life of village councils and the term of office of councillors.

The N.-W. F. P. Pre-emption (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To bring the N.-W. F. P. Pre-emption Act into line with the N.-W. F. P. Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act 1935.

The N.-W. F. P. War Services (Exemption from (Disqualification) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To re-enact and consolidate the N.-W. F. P. War Services (Exemption from disqualification) Act, 1940, and the N.-W. F. P. War Services Exemption from disqualification Ordinance 1943.

The N.-W. F. P. Legislative Assembly Speaker's and Deputy Speaker's Salaries (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To increase the salaries of Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

The N. W. F. P. Ministers' Salaries (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 18, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent August 26, 1943):—To increase the salaries of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister and Hon'ble Ministers and to provide suitable conveyances for them at Government cost.

The N. W. F. P. Legislative Assembly (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Act, 1943, (August 27, 1943), (H. E.'s Assent September 12, 1943):—To increase the amount of daily allowances admissible to the Members of the N. W. F. P. Legislative Assembly.

The N. W. F. P. Trade Employees Bill:—Introduced on August 18, 1943, and circulated for eliciting public opinion.

Congress Responsibilities for August Disturbances
1942-43

Gandhi-Wavell Correspondence

Gandhi's Reply to Government Indictment

Gandhi-Tottenham Correspondence

Etc. Etc. Etc.

Congress Responsibilities for August Disturbances 1942-43

Gandhiji's Letters to Wavell

"Quit India" Stand Explained

"The Congress and I are wholly innocent of the charges brought against us" says Gandhiji, in a letter to H. E. Lord Wavell, dated, February 17, 1944, in which Gandhiji asked for an impartial tribunal to enquire into the charges made by the Government.

Warning the British in high places against self-satisfaction at the present state of affairs, Gandhiji says: "Promises for the future are valueless. Present performance is the need of the moment if a bloodier war is to be avoided in the future. Therefore, real war effort must mean satisfaction of India's demands."

In his last letter to the Viceroy, dated April 9, replying to the Viceroy's letter in which Lord Wavell called upon the Congress to abandon non-co-operation, Gandhiji says: "I agree with you that whilst you hold the views expressed in your letter under reply the proper place for one like me is Government's prison, and unless there is a change of heart, view and policy on the part of Government, I am content to remain your prisoner."

The correspondence between Gandhiji and the Viceroy, which took place in February, March and April 1944, was released for publication in the month of June.

Text of Correspondence

GANDHIJI'S DEMAND FOR IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL

The following is the text of the correspondence :

Detention Camp, Feb. 17, 1944.

Dear friend,

Although I have not had the pleasure of meeting you, I address you on purpose as 'Dear friend.' I am looked upon by the representatives of the British Government as a great, if not the greatest enemy of the British. Since I regard myself as a friend and servant of humanity including the British, in token of my goodwill I call you, the foremost representative of the British in India, my friend.'

I have received, in common with some others, a notice informing for the first time why I am detained, and conferring on me the right of representation against my detention. I have duly sent my reply, but I have as yet heard nothing from the Government. A reminder too has gone after a wait of thirteen days.

I have said some only have received notices, because, out of six of us in this camp, only three have received them. I presume that all will receive them in due course. But my mind is filled with the suspicion that the notices have been sent as a matter of form only, and not with any intention to do justice. I do not wish to burden this letter with argument. I repeat what I said in the correspondence with your predecessor, that the Congress and I are wholly innocent of the charges brought against us. Nothing but an impartial tribunal to investigate the Government case, and the Congress case against the Government, will bring out the truth.

"SELF-SATISFACTION BODES ILL"

The speeches recently made on behalf of the Government in the Assembly on the release motion, and the gagging order on Shri. Sarojini Devi, I consider to be playing with fire. I distinguish between defeat of Japanese arms and Allied victory. The latter must carry with it the deliverance of India from the foreign yoke. The spirit of India demands complete freedom from all foreign dominance and would therefore resist Japanese yoke equally with British or any other. The Congress represents that spirit in full measure. It has grown to be an institution whose roots have gone deep down into the Indian soil. I was, therefore, staggered to read that the Government were satisfied with things as they were going. Had they not got from among the Indian people the men and money they wanted? Was not the Government machinery running smooth? This self-satisfaction bodes ill for Britain, India and the world if it does not quickly give place to a searching of hearts in British high places.

Promises for the future are valueless in the face of the world struggle in which the fortunes of all nations and therefore, of the whole of humanity are involved. Present performance is the peremptory need of the moment if the war is to end in world peace and not be a preparation for another war bloodier than

the present, if indeed, there can be a bloodier one. Therefore, real war effort must mean satisfaction of India's demand. "Quit India" only gives vivid expression to that demand, and has not the sinister and poisonous meaning attributed to it without warrant by the Government of India. The expression is charged with the friendliest feeling for Britain in terms of the whole of humanity.

I have done. I thought that, if I claim to be a friend of the British, as I do, nothing should deter me from sharing my deepest thoughts with you. It is no pleasure for me to be in this camp, where all my creature comforts are supplied without any effort on my part, when I know that millions outside are starving for want of food. But I should feel utterly helpless if I went out and missed the food by which alone living becomes worth-while.

I am, yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi.

Viceroy's Letter

Viceroy's Camp, India.
Nagpur, 25th. Feb. 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I thank you for your letter of February 17th. You will by now have received the reply to your representation. I am sorry to hear that three of those in the Aga Khan's Palace have not received notices. This will be looked into at once.

I expect you have seen in the papers reports of the speech I made to the Legislature on the same day on which you wrote that letter. This states my point of view and I need not repeat what I said then. I enclose a copy for your convenience if you wish to read it.

I take this opportunity to express to you deep sympathy from my wife and myself at the death of Mrs. Gandhi. We understand what this loss must mean to you after so many years of companionship.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. Wavell,

Gandhi's Reply

TRIBUTE TO SHRI KASTURBA

Detention Camp. March 9. 1944.

Dear friend,

I must thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of 17th. February. At the outset I send you and Lady Wavell my thanks for your kind condolences on the death of my wife. Though for her sake I have welcomed her death as bringing freedom from living agony, I feel the loss more than I had thought I should. We were a couple outside the ordinary. It was in 1906 that, by mutual consent and after unconscious trials, we definitely adopted self-restraint as a rule of life. To my great joy this knit us together as never before. We ceased to be two different entities. Without my wishing it, she chose to lose herself in me. The result was she became truly my better half. She was a woman always of very strong will which in our early days I used to mistake for obstinacy. But that strong will enabled her to become quite unwittingly, my teacher in the art and practice of non-violent non-co-operation. The practice began with my own family. When I introduced it in 1906 in the political field it came to be known by the more comprehensive and specially coined name of Satyagraha. When the course of Indian imprisonments commenced in South Africa, Shri Kasturba was among the civil resisters. She went through greater physical trials than I. Although she had gone through several imprisonments, she did not take kindly to the present incarceration during which all creature comforts were at her disposal. My arrest simultaneously with that of many others and her own immediately following, gave her a great shock and embittered her. She was wholly unprepared for my arrest. I had assured her that the Government trusted my non-violence and would not arrest me unless I courted arrest myself. Indeed, the nervous shock was so great that after her arrest she developed violent diarrhoea and, but for the attention that Dr. Sushila Nayar, who was arrested at the same time as the deceased, was able to give her, she might have died before joining me in this detention camp, where my presence soothed her and the diarrhoea stopped without any further medicament. Not so the bitterness. It led to fretfulness ending in painfully slow dissolution of the body.

(2) In the light of the foregoing you will perhaps understand the pain I felt when I read in the papers the statement made on behalf of the Government, which I hold was an unfortunate departure from truth regarding her who was precious to me beyond measure. I ask you please to send for and read the complaint in

the matter which I have forwarded to the Additional Secretary to the Government of India (Home Department). Truth is said to be the first and the heaviest casualty in war. How I wish in this war it could be otherwise in the case of the Allied Powers.

(3) I now come to your address, which you delivered before the Legislature and of which you have kindly sent me a copy. When the newspapers containing the address were received, I was by the bedside of the deceased. Shri Mirabai read to me the Associated Press report. But my mind was elsewhere. Therefore, the receipt of your speech in a handy form was most welcome. I have now read it with all the attention it deserves. Having gone through it, I feel drawn to offer a few remarks, all the more so as you have observed that the views expressed by you need not be regarded as final. May this letter lead to a reshaping of some of them.

(4) In the middle of page two you speak of the welfare of the "Indian peoples." I have seen in some Viceregal pronouncements the inhabitants of India being referred to as the people of India. Are the two expressions synonymous?

BRITISH POLICY AND "QUIT INDIA" DEMAND

(5) At page 13, referring to the attainment of self-government by India, you say, "I am absolutely convinced not only that the above represents the genuine desire of the British people, but that they wish to see an early realisation of it. It is qualified only at present by an absolute determination to let nothing stand in the way of the earliest possible defeat of Germany and Japan; and by a resolve to see that in the solution of the constitutional problem full account is taken of the interests of those who have loyally supported us in the war and at all other times—the soldiers who have served the common cause; the people who have worked with us; the Rulers and the populations of the States to whom we are pledged; the minorities who have trusted us to see that they get a fair deal..... But until the two main Indian parties at least can come to terms, I do not see any immediate hope of progress." Without reasoning it out, I venture to give my paraphrase of your pronouncement. "We, the British, shall stand by the Indian soldier, whom we have brought into being and trained for consolidating our rule and position in India, and who, by experience, we have found can effectively help us in our wars against other nations. We shall also stand by the Rulers of the Indian States, many of whom are our creation and all of whom owe their present position to us, even when these Rulers curb or actually crush the spirit of the people whom they rule. Similarly shall we stand by the minorities whom we too have encouraged and used against the vast majority when the latter have at all attempted to resist our rule. It makes no difference that the majority seek to replace it by a rule of the will of the people of India taken as a whole. And in no case will we transfer power unless Hindus and Muslims come to us with an agreement among themselves." The position taken up in the paragraph quoted and interpreted is no new thing. I regard the situation thus envisaged as hopeless, and I claim in this to represent the thought of the man in the street. Out of the contemplation of this hopelessness was born the anguished cry of "Quit India." What I see happening in this country day after day provides a complete vindication of the "Quit India" formula as defined by me in my considered writings.

(6) I note as I read your speech that you do not regard the sponsors of the formula of "Quit India" as outcasts to be shunned by society. You believe them to be high-minded persons. Then, treat them as such and trust their interpretation of their own formula and you cannot go wrong.

WITHDRAWAL OF AUGUST RESOLUTION

(7) After developing the Cripps offer you have said at page 16 in the middle paragraph..... "The demand for release of those leaders who are in detention is an utterly barren one until there is some sign on their part of willingness to co-operate. It needs no consultation with any one or anything but their own conscience for anyone of those under detention to decide whether he will withdraw from the "Quit India" Resolution and the policy which had tragic consequences and will co-operate in the great tasks ahead." Then again, reverting to the same subject you say on pages 19 and 20: "There is an important element which stands aloof; I recognise how much ability and high-mindedness it contains; but I deplore its present policy and methods as barren and unpractical. I should like to have the co-operation of this element in solving the present and the future problems of India. If its leaders feel that they cannot consent to take part in the present Government of India, they may still be able to assist in considering future pro-

blems. But I see no reason to release those responsible for the declaration of August 8th, 1942, until I am convinced that the policy of non-co-operation and even of obstruction has been withdrawn—not in sackcloth and ashes, that helps no one—but in recognition of a mistaken and unprofitable policy."

"PUT ME IN TOUCH WITH WORKING COMMITTEE"

(8) I am surprised that you, an eminent soldier and man of affairs, should hold such an opinion. How can the withdrawal of a resolution, arrived at jointly by hundreds of men and women after much debating and careful consideration, be a matter of individual conscience? A resolution jointly undertaken can be honourably, conscientiously and properly withdrawn only after joint discussion and deliberation. Individual conscience may come into play after this necessary step, not before. Is a prisoner ever free to exercise his conscience? Is it just and proper to expect him to do so?

(9) Again, you recognise "much ability and high-mindedness" in those who represent the Congress organisation and then deplore their present policy and methods as "barren and unpractical." Does not the second statement cancel the first? Able and high-minded men may come to erroneous decisions, but I have not before heard such people's policy and methods being described as "barren and unpractical." Is it not up to you to discuss the pros and cons of their policy with them before pronouncing judgment, specially when they are also admittedly representatives of millions of their people? Does it become an all-powerful Government to be afraid of the consequences of releasing unarmed men and women with a backing only of men and women equally unarmed and even pledged to non-violence? Moreover, why should you hesitate to put me in touch with the Working Committee members so as to enable me to know their minds and reactions?

(10) Then you have talked of the "tragic consequences" of the 'Quit India' resolution. I have said enough in my reply to the Government pamphlet "Congress Responsibility etc." combating the charge that the Congress was responsible for those consequences. I commend the pamphlet and my reply to your attention, if you have not already seen them. Here I would just like to emphasise what I have already said. Had Government stayed action till they had studied my speeches and those of the members of the Working Committee history would have been written differently.

(11) You have made much of the fact that your Executive Council is predominantly Indian. Surely, their being Indians no more makes them representatives of India than non-Indians. Conversely, it is quite conceivable that a non-Indian may be a true representative of India if he is elected by the vote of the Indian people. It would give no satisfaction even if the head of the Indian Government was a distinguished Indian not chosen by the free vote of the people.

INDIAN SOLDIERS NOT "VOLUNTEERS"

(12) Even you, I am sorry, have fallen into the common error of describing the Indian forces as having been recruited by "voluntary enlistment." A person who takes to soldiering as a profession will enlist himself whatever he gets his market wage. Voluntary enlistment has come to bear by association a meaning much higher than that which attaches to an enlistment like that of the Indian soldier. Were those who carried out the orders at the Jallianwala massacre volunteers? The very Indian soldiers who have been taken out of India and are showing unexampled bravery will be ready to point their rifles unerringly at their own countrymen at the orders of the British Government, their employers. Will they deserve the honourable name of volunteers?

VICEROY INVITED TO MEET DETAINED LEADERS

(13) You are flying all over India. You have not hesitated to go among the skeletons of Bengal. May I suggest an interruption in your scheduled flights and descent upon Ahmednagar and the Aga Khan's Palace in order to probe the hearts of your captives? We are all friends of the British, however much we may criticise the British Government and system in India. If you can but trust, you will find us to be the greatest helpers in the fight against Nazism, Fascism, Japanism and the like.

(14) Now I revert to your letter of the 25th February. Shri Mirabai and I have received replies to our representations. The remaining inmates have received their notices. The reply received by me I regard as a mockery, the one received by Shri Mirabai as an insult. According to the report of the Home Member's

I take up the general matter first.

You have sent me a frank reply. I propose to reciprocate your courtesy by being perfectly frank. Friendship, to be true, demands frankness even though it may sometime appear unpleasant. If anything I say offends you, please accept my apology in advance.

It is a pity that you have refused to deal with important points raised in my letter.

Your letter is a plea for co-operation by the Congress in the present administration and failing that in planning for the future. In my opinion, this required equality between the parties and mutual trust. But equality is absent and Government distrust of the Congress can be seen at every turn. The result is that suspicion of Government is universal. Add to this the fact that Congressmen have no faith in the competence of the Government to ensure India's future good. This want of faith is based upon bitter experience of the past and present conduct of the British administration of India. Is it not high time that it co-operated with the people of India through their elected representatives instead of expecting co-operation from them?

AUGUST CRISIS CREATED BY GOVERNMENT

All this was implied in the August Resolution. The sanction behind the demand in the resolution was not violence, but self-suffering. Anyone, be he Congressman or other, who acted against this rule of conduct had no authority to use the Congress name for his action. But I see that this resolution repels you as it did Lord Linlithgow. You know that I have joined issue on the point. I have seen nothing since to alter my view. You have been good enough to credit me with "intelligence" "experience" and "acumen." Let me say that all these three gifts have failed to make me realise that the effect of the Congress resolution "must be to hamper prosecution of the war." The responsibility for what followed the hasty arrest of Congressmen must rest solely on the Government. For, they invited the crisis, not the authors of the resolution.

"MARTIAL LAW IN THE WHOLE OF INDIA"

You remind me that you were Commander-in-Chief at the time. How much better it would have been for all concerned if confidence in the immeasurable strength of arms had ruled your action instead of fear of a rebellion! Had the Government stayed their hand at the time, surely, bloodshed of those months would have been avoided. And it is highly likely that the Japanese menace would have become a thing of the past. Unfortunately it was not to be. And so the menace is still with us, and what is more, the Government are pursuing a policy of suppression of liberty and truth.

I have studied the latest Ordinance about the detenus, and I recall the Rowlatt Act of 1919. It was popularly called the Black Act. As you know, it gave rise to an unprecedented agitation. That Act pales into insignificance before the series of Ordinances that are being showered from the Viceregal throne. Martial Law in effect governs not one province as in 1919, but the whole of India. Things are moving from bad to worse.

You say, "It is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage." I must deny both the charges. I venture to suggest that you should follow the golden rule, and withdraw your statement and suspend judgment till you have submitted the evidence in your possession to an impartial tribunal and obtained its verdict. I confess that I do not make the request with much confidence. For in dealing with Congressmen and others Government have combined the prosecutor, judge and jailor in the same person and thus made proper defence impossible on the part of the accused. Judgments of courts are being rendered nugatory by fresh Ordinances. No man's freedom can be said to be safe in this extraordinary situation. You will probably report that it is an exigency of the war. I wonder!

"INDIA ONE VAST PRISON"

As I visualise India to-day, it is one vast prison containing four hundred million souls. You are its sole custodian. The Government prisons are prisons within this prison. I agree with you that whilst you hold the views expressed in your letter under reply, the proper place for one like me is a Government prison. And unless there is a change of heart, view and policy on the part of the Government, I am quite content to remain your prisoner. Only, I hope, you

will listen to the request made by me through the proper channels to remove me and my fellow-prisoners to some other prison where the cost of our detention need not be even one tenth of what it is to-day.

As to my complaint about Mr. Butler's statement and later the Hon. Secretary's, I have received two letters from the Home Department in reply. I am sorry to say, they have appeared to me highly unsatisfactory. They ignore patent facts and betray an obstinate refusal to face truth even on a wholly non-political issue. My correspondence with the Home Department continues. I invite your attention to it, if you can spare the time and are interested in the subject.

I am glad and thankful that Shri Mirabai's (Miss Slade's) case is being considered in the light of what I said about her in my letter.

Gandhi-Linlithgow Correspondence

The following are the texts of letters exchanged between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Linlithgow, the previous Viceroy, before the latter's departure from India :—

Mahatma Gandhi wrote to Lord Linlithgow on September 27, 1943, as follows :

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

On the eve of your departure from India I would like to send you a word. Of all the high functionaries I have had the honour of knowing, none has been the cause of such deep sorrow to me as you have been. It has cut me to the quick to have to think of you as having countenanced untruth, and that regarding one whom you at one time considered as your friend. I hope and pray that God will some day put it into your heart to realise that you, a representative of a great nation, had been led into a grievous error.

With good wishes. I still remain, your friend, M. K. Gandhi.

Lord Linlithgow replied (marked "personal") as follows :

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have received your letter of 27th September. I am indeed sorry that your feelings about any deeds or words of mine should be as you describe. But I must be allowed, as gently as I may, to make plain to you that I am quite unable to accept your interpretation of the events in question.

As for the corrective virtues of time and reflection, evidently they are ubiquitous in their operation, and wisely to be rejected by no man.

I am, sincerely, (Sd.) Linlithgow.

Along with these letters, which run to 120 closely typed fullscap sheets, Mahatma Gandhi also circulated to his friends another equally bulky pamphlet which was his reply to the Government publication entitled "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43." The following is the text :—

Congress Responsibility for Disturbances 1942-43

Gandhi's Reply to Government Indictment

Detention Camp,
15th. July, 1943.

To the Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, New Delhi.

In reply to my request dated 5th. March last for a copy of Government of India Publication entitled "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43," I received a copy on 13th. April. It contains several corrections marked in red ink. Some of them are striking.

2. I take it that the Government have based the charges made in the publication against the Congress and myself on the material printed therein and not on the evidence which, as stated in the preface, is withheld from the public.

3. The preface is brief and is signed by Sir R. Tottenham, Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department. It is dated 13th. February last, i.e., three days after the commencement of my recent fast.

The date is ominous. Why was the period of my fast chosen for publishing a document in which I am the target?

4. The preface commences thus:

"In response to demands which have reached Government from several sources, Government have now prepared a review which brings together a number of facts—bearing on the responsibility of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress High Command for the disturbances which followed the sanctioning of a mass movement by the A. I. C. C. on August 8th, 1942."

There is an obvious misstatement here. The disturbances followed not the "sanctioning of the mass movement by the A. I. C. C." but the arrests made by the Government.

As for the "demands" so far as I am aware, they began soon after the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen all over India. As the Government are aware, in my letters to H. E. the Viceroy, the last being dated 7th. February, 1943, I had asked for proof in support of my alleged guilt. The evidence now produced might have been given to me when I raised the question. Had my request been complied with, one advantage would certainly have accrued. I would have been heard in answer to the charges brought against me. That very process would have delayed the fast, and who knows, if Government had been patient with me, it might have even prevented it.

5. The preface contains the following sentence: "Almost all the facts presented in this review are, or should be, already within the knowledge of the public." Therefore, so far as the public are concerned, there was no such hurry as to require publication of the document during the fast.

This train of reasoning has led me to the inference that it was published in expectation of my death which medical opinion must have considered almost a certainty. It was feared even during my previous long fasts. I hope my inference is wholly wrong and the Government had a just and valid reason for choosing the time that they did, for the publication of what is after all an indictment of the Congress and me. I hope to be pardoned for putting on paper an inference, which if true, must discredit the Government. I feel that I am being just to them by unburdening myself of a suspicion instead of harbouring it and allowing it to cloud my judgment about their dealings with me.

PROSECUTOR, POLICEMAN AND JAILOR

6. I now come to the indictment itself. It reads like a presentation of his case by a prosecutor. In the present case the prosecutor happens to be also the policeman and jailor. He first arrests and gags his victims, and then opens his case behind their backs.

7. I have read it again and again. I have gone through the numbers of *Harijan* which my companions happened to have with them, and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in my writings and doings that could have warranted the inferences and the innuendoes of which the indictment is full. In spite of my desire to see myself in my writings as the author has seen me I have completely failed.

8. The indictment opens with a mis-representation. I am said to have deplored "the introduction of foreign soldiers into India to aid in India's defence." In the *Harijan* article on which the charge is based, I have refused to believe that India was to be defended through the introduction of foreign soldiers. If it is India's defence that is aimed at, why should trained Indian soldiers be sent away from India and foreign soldiers brought in instead? Why should the Congress—an organisation which was born and lives for the very sake of India's freedom—be suppressed?

I am clearer to-day in my mind than I was when I penned that article on 19th. April, that India is not being defended, and that if things continue to shape themselves as they are India will sink at the end of the war deeper than she is to-day, so that she might forget the very word freedom.

Let me quote the relevant passage from the *Harijan* article referred by the author:

"I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the

possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary."

(*Harijan*, April 26, 1942, page 128.)

9. The second paragraph of the indictment opens with this pregnant sentence : "It will be suggested that during the period of Mr. Gandhi's first advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay in August the Congress High Command and in the later stages the Congress organisation as a whole were deliberately setting the stage for a mass movement designed to free India finally from British rule."

Let me underline the phrase "it will be suggested." Why should anything be left to suggestion about a movement which is open and above board ?

Much ado has been made about the simplest things which nobody has cared to deny and of which Congressmen are even proud. The Congress organisation as a whole "deliberately set the stage designed to free India finally from British rule," as early as the year 1920 and not since my 'first advocacy of British withdrawal from India' as suggested in the indictment.

Ever since that year the effort for a mass movement has never relaxed. This can be proved from numerous speeches of Congress leaders and from Congress resolutions.

Young and impatient Congressmen and even older men have not hesitated at times to press me to hasten the mass movement. But I, who knew better, always restrained their ardour, and I must gratefully admit that they gladly submitted to the restraint. The contradiction of this long period to the interval between my advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7th, is wholly wrong and misleading. I know of no special staging since 26th. April 1942.

10. The same paragraph then says that "an essential preliminary" to an examination of the type of movement "is a clear understanding of the real motives underlying the move."

SEARCH FOR MOTIVES

Why should motives be searched when everything is there in black and white ? I can say without any hesitation that my motives are always plain. Why I asked for the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India has been discussed by me almost threadbare in public.

11. At page 2 of the indictment, a phrase has been taken from an article entitled "One Thing Needful," dated 10th. May 1942, and I am represented as saying that I would devote the whole of my energy "to this supreme act." By simply detaching the phrase from its context, mystery has been made to surround it. The phrase "supreme act" occurs in an argument addressed to an English friend and if it is read in its setting, it ceases to be mysterious or objectionable, unless the very idea of withdrawal is held objectionable.

Here are the relevant parts from the argument :

"I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world.

"I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest.....Racial superiority is treated not as a vice but a virtue. This is true not only in India ; but it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

"This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed out the remedy—complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions ; it will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations.

"And the clean end of Imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of Imperialism.

"British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner

suggested by the writer. It is ill equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it.

"And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so India cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it.

"Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mighty nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

"I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realisation of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory.

"The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have full sway." (*Harijan*, May, 10, 1942, p. 148).

NOTHING TO WITHDRAW

In this long extract, the phrase "supreme act" takes its legitimate place. It does not refer simply to the British withdrawal. But it sums up all that must precede and succeed it; it is an act worthy of the energy not of one person but of hundreds. This is how I began my answer to the English friend's letter.

"I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not been to their great virtues."

To read and fully understand my writings, it is necessary to understand always this background. The whole of the movement has been conceived for the mutual benefit of India and England.

Unfortunately, the author, ignoring this background has approached my writings with coloured spectacle, has torn sentences and phrases from their context, and dressed them up to suit his pre-conception. Thus he has put out of joint "their withdrawal removes the bait", and omitted the sentence that immediately follows and which I have restored in the foregoing extract. As is clear from the above article, unadulterated non-co-operation here refers exclusively to the Japanese.

12. The last paragraph at page 2 begins thus :—

"In its earlier stages Mr. Gandhi's "Quit India" move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the BRITISH (CAPS mine), and of all Allied and British troops."

I have searched, and so have the friends with me, in vain, for some expression in my writings which would warrant the opinion that "Quit India" move was meant as a proposal for the physical withdrawal of the British from India,

It is true that colour was lent to such an interpretation by a superficial reading of a sentence in the article of *Harijan* of April 26th, already quoted. As soon as my attention was drawn to it by an English friend, I wrote in the *Harijan* of 24th May as follows :

"There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews' friendship was enough to tie me to the British people.

"With this clear enunciation of my views before him at the time of penning the indictment, how could he say that I had 'meant' physical withdrawal of the British as distinguished from the British power? And I am not aware that my writing was 'widely interpreted as such.' He has quoted nothing in support of this statement.

13 The author proceeds in the same paragraph :

"As late as June 14th, he makes, for the purpose of his scheme, the assumption 'that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base.'"

'For the purpose of his scheme' is a gratuitous interpolation here. The extract is taken from an interview with several journalists. I was answering a series of questions.

At one stage I had put a counter question thus. 'Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do.'

They replied: "That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

I rejoined: "Well, therein comes my non-violence. For, we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon." It is clear from this quotation that I was not expounding any scheme. I was merely arguing about possibilities based on assumptions agreed between the interviewers and myself.

POSITION OF FOREIGN TROOPS

14. The author proceeds:

"Added strength is given to the belief that this is a correct interpretation of Mr. Gandhi's original intentions by the prominence, to which attention has already been drawn, of the theme that the British withdrawal would remove any Japanese motive for invading India, for with the British and Allied armies still in India, how is the bait removed?"

I have just now shown that the physical withdrawal of the British was never contemplated by me. The withdrawal of the Allied and the British troops was certainly contemplated in the first instance. Therefore it is not a question of "interpretation", because it is one of fact. But the sentence has been impressed in order to make what is straight look crooked.

15. Then, proceeds the author: "At the same time, he made it clear that on the British departure the Indian Army would be disbanded."

I made clear no such thing. What I did was to discuss with interviewers the possibilities in the event of British withdrawal. Indian army being a creation of the British Government, I assumed, would be automatically disbanded when that Power withdrew unless it was taken over by a treaty by the replacing Government.

If the withdrawal took place by agreement and with goodwill on both sides these matters should present no difficulty.

16. From the same paragraph take the following:—

"Bowling to the gathering force of this opposition and also, as will be shown later, with a possible view to reconciling disagreement among members of the Working Committee, Mr. Gandhi discovered the 'gap' in his original proposals. In *Harijan* of June 14th. he paved the way,—by the slightly cryptic assertion that, if he had his way, the Indian National Government when formed would tolerate the presence of the United Nations on Indian soil under certain well defined conditions but would permit no further assistance—for the more definite statement made to an American journalist in the following week's *Harijan*, when in reply to a question whether he envisaged Free India's allowing Allied troops to operate from India, he said: 'I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation.' He continued that he did not contemplate the complete shifting of Allied troops from India and that, provided India became entirely free, he could not insist on their withdrawal." This is for me the key thought opening the author's mind. It is built on finding motives other than those that are apparent from my language. Had I been guided by the force of the opposition whether from the foreign or the Indian Press or from Congressmen, I should not have hesitated to say so.

It is well known that I am as capable of resisting opposition that makes no appeal to my head or my heart, as I am of readily yielding when it does. But the literal fact is that when I gave the country the withdrawal formula, I was possessed by one idea and one only, that if India was to be saved and also the Allied cause, and if India was to play not merely an effective but, may be, a decisive part in the war, India must be absolutely free now.

The 'gap' was this: although the British Government might be willing to declare India's independence, they might still wish, for their own and for China's defence to retain their troops in India. What would be my position in that case?

It is now wellknown that the difficulty was presented to me by Mr. Louis Fischer. He had come to Sevagram and stayed with me for nearly a week. As a result of the discussions between us, he drew up certain questions for me to answer. My reply to his second question, the author describes as a 'slightly cryptic assertion' paving the way for a 'more definite statement in the following week's *Harijan*.' I give below the whole of the article embodying the questions and answers. It was written on 7th June, 1942, and appeared in the *Harijan* dated 14th June, p. 188 :

PROVISIONAL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

A friend was discussing with me the implications of the new proposal. As the discussion was naturally desultory I asked him to frame his questions which I would answer through *Harijan*. He agreed and gave me the following :

1. Q. You ask the British Government to withdraw immediately from India. Would Indians thereupon form a National Government, and what groups or parties would participate in such an Indian Government ?

A. My proposal is one-sided, i.e., for the British Government to act upon wholly irrespective of what Indians would do or would not do. I have even assumed temporary chaos on their withdrawal. But if the withdrawal takes place in an orderly manner, it is likely that on their withdrawal a provisional Government will be set up by and from among the present leaders. But another thing may also happen. All those who have no thought of the nation but only of themselves may make a bid for power and get together the turbulent forces with which they would seek to gain control somewhere and somehow. I should hope that with the complete, final and honest withdrawal of the British power the wise leaders will realise their responsibility, forget their differences for the moment and set up a provincial Government out of the material left by the British power. As there would be no power regulating the admission or rejection of parties or persons to or from the Council board, restraint alone will be the guide. If that happens probably the Congress, the League and the States representatives will be allowed to function and they will come to a loose understanding on the formation of provisional National Government. All this is necessarily guesswork and nothing more.

2. Q. Would that Indian National Government permit the United Nations to use Indian territory as a base of military operations against Japan and other Axis powers ?

A. Assuming that the National Government is formed and if it answers my expectations, its first act would be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against aggressive powers, it being common cause that India will have nothing to do with any of the Fascist powers and India would be morally bound to help the United Nations.

3. Q. What further assistance would this Indian National Government be ready to render the United Nations in the course of the present war against the Fascist aggressors ?

A. If I have any hand in guiding the imagined National Government, there would be no further assistance save the toleration of the United Nations on the Indian soil under well-defined conditions. Naturally there will be no prohibition against any Indian giving his own personal help by way of being a recruit or, and of giving financial aid. It should be understood that the Indian army has been disbanded with the withdrawal of British power. Again, if I have any say in the councils of the National Government all its power, prestige and resources would be used towards bringing about world peace. But of course after the formation of the National Government my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and national-ist India may go war-mad.

4. Q : Do you believe this collaboration between India and the Allied powers might or should be formulated in a treaty of alliance or an agreement for mutual aid ?

PROSTRATION OF GREAT NATION

A : I think the question is altogether premature, and in any case it will not much matter whether the relations are regulated by treaty or agreement. I do not even see any difference.

Let me sum up my attitude. One thing and only one thing for me is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples'—must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis. I see no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the

Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count a 'dust' before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic. They and they alone have the power to undo the wrong. They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution. That necessary wash will be their surest insurance of success, for they will have the good wishes—unexpressed but no less certain—of millions of dumb Asiatics and Africans. Then, but not till then, will they be fighting for a new order. This is the reality. All else is speculation. I have allowed myself, however, to indulge in it as a test of my *bonafides* and for the sake of explaining in a concrete manner what I mean by my proposal.

What is described as the 'mere definite statement' is nothing but an impromptu reply given to an American journalist, Mr. Grover, representative of the Associated Press of America. If that interview had not chanced to come about, there might have been no statement 'more definite' than what appeared in my reply to Mr. Louis Fischer. Hence the writer's suggestion that I "paved the way" for "the more definite statement"....in the following week's *Harizan* is altogether unwarranted, if I may not call it even mischievous.

I do not regard my answers to Mr. Louis Fischer as a "slightly cryptic statement". They are deliberate answers given to deliberate questions framed after a full discussion lasting a week. My answers show very clearly that I had no scheme beyond the 'Quit India' formula, that all else was guess, and that immediately the Allied Nations' difficulty was made clear to me, I capitulated.

I saw the 'gap' and filled it in, in the best manner I knew. The 'definite statement' fortunately for me in my opinion, leaves little room if any for conjectures and insinuations in which the writer has indulged. Let it speak for itself. Here are the relevant portions :

Coming to the point, Mr. Grover said again : "There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it ?"

It depends on the response made by the Government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside.

"When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal ?"

"Oh, yes," said Gandhiji. "I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end to-day. Are you startled ?"

"I am not," said Mr. Grover, "you have been asking for it and working for it."

"That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go to-day for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances that Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. To-day the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain. I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt.

"Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India ?" Mr. Grover pertinently asked

"I, do," said Gandhiji. "It will be only then that you will see real co-operation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. To-morrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a 'free' India."

"You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression ?"

"It does."

"When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India ?"

"Not necessarily."

"It is on this that there is a lot of misconception."

"You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harizan*. I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India."

"But suppose your proposal is rejected what will be your next move ?"

EXPLOITATION OF POLICY OF NON-EMBARRASSMENT

"It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not in-

terfere with the movement of British troops but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India, free and independent, will play a prominent part in defending China. To-day I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the stranglehold on India. And to-day it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts servility it means goodbye for ever to freedom."

"All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?" was Mr. Grover's next question,

"I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the stranglehold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races."

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India 'after' an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of the victory?" Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity—by no means due to the grace of the Government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to Swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains—when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

"You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India," asked Mr. Grover half incredulously.

"I do indeed" replied Gandhiji.

"With any possibility of success?"

"There is every possibility, I should think," said Gandhiji. I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause."

"You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?"

BRITISH PROPAGANDA IN AMERICA

"I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organised in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not effect the administration."

"It may, slowly," said Mr. Grover apologetically.

"Slowly?" said Gandhiji. "I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China."

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji, of course, does not want independence as a reward of any services but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue. "What specific things would be done by India to save China," asked Mr. Grover, "if India is declared independent?"

"Great things I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them to-day," said Gandhiji. "For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organisations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or

favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies."

"By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?"

"I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment."

"No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?"

"Myself? I do not count—with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the co-operation—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My co-operation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. To-day because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and, therefore, helping the Allied cause."

LESSONS OF BURMA AND RUSSIA

"May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?" said Mr. Grover.

"You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little co-operation from Burmans, on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India—to a safer base, I cannot say to-day that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese, I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared to-day I have no doubt India becomes a powerful Ally."

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States. "I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks," said Gandhiji. "Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears."

"Would not Dominion Status declared to day do equally well?" was Mr. Grover's final question.

"No good," said Gandhiji instantaneously. "We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself." (*Harjan*, June 21, 1942, pp. 193. et. seq.)

THE ALLAHABAD DRAFT RESOLUTION

17. The rest of the chapter is taken up with a colourful description of the draft resolution I sent to Allahabad and a quotation containing remarks attributed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Shri Rajagopalachari on that resolution.

Immediately after the publication of the extracts from the notes seized by the Government, Panditji issued a statement. I cannot understand why the author has disregarded that important statement, unless for the reason that he disbelieved Panditji's explanation.

As for Shri Rajagopalachari's statement, the author stands on less insecure ground. Rajaji certainly holds the views attributed to him. In the interview with Mr. Grover, the American correspondent, this is what I said about Rajaji's difference with me.

"May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?" "I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking at valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public.

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C.R.'s crusade for the formation of a National Government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that O. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmonise with them."

"You are right," said Gandhiji. "It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No. I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause" (*Harijan*, June 21, 1942, p. 195.)

18. The first chapter concludes with the following commentary on the draft which had been sent by me to the Working Committee at Allahabad:

"A draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan."

And this is written in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's repudiation of the statement attributed to him, and in spite of my explanation about differences with Rajaji—all of which was before the writer.

19. In support of my contention that the author had no warrant for the opinions expressed in the sentences quoted, I would like to draw attention to the following extracts from my statement reported in the Press on 1st August last:

"As the language of the draft (the one that was sent to Allahabad) shows, it had many I's to be dotted and T's to be crossed, it was sent through Miraben to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram, to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission—deliberate—from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and therefore any reference to China and Russia.

For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never even in a most unguarded moment, expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her Imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wishes to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she has most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of Imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half."

How in the face of this categorical statement the author could say that the actuating motive behind the "Quit India" move was that I was "convinced that Axis would win the war" passes understanding.

20. In support of the same charge the author says:

"That this attitude persisted long after the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee is shown by the following remark made by Mr. Gandhi in *Harijan* of July 19th, in reply to a question whether it would not be wiser to postpone his movement until Britain had settled with the Germans and the Japanese.

"No because I know you will not settle with Germans without us."

I quote below from the article in which this opinion is expressed. It is from the *Harijan* of July 19, 1942, pp. 234 and 235 and is entitled "A Two Minutes' Interview", the interviewer being a correspondent of the *Daily Express*, London.

"But the correspondent of the *Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive and who was not staying until the end, said he would be content with just a couple of minutes' interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request. He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked:

"Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?"

"Our movement," said Gandhiji, "will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But, of course, if there is no co-operation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say."

"But," said Mr. Young, "think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?"

"Yes, if my submission is accepted."

"What do you mean by your submission?—That Britain should offer non-violent battle?"

FREE INDIA A REAL ALLY

"No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted, victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be a speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I."

This was far from convincing Mr. Young. He would not think of any movement with equanimity. So he made an appeal to Gandhiji's sentiment—a sentiment he had more than once expressed.

"Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombing which the British people have sustained?"

"Oh, yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I specially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply."

"Then don't you think," said Mr. Young, "it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?"

"No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent per cent co-operation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. British have to-day no contribution from a free India. To-morrow, as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the 'n'th degree. This is surely self-proved."

It is curious that sentences taken out of a piece breathing concern for the success of the Allied arms are here presented as an indication of my 'pro-Axis' mentality.

21. The following passage is then reproduced from my letter to H. E. the Viceroy of 14th August last as 'significant':

"I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can."

The misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia has been underlined by the author who thus comments on the passage.

"They foresaw a British rearguard action across India and the devastation that this must entail."

According to his wont the author has failed to quote the whole of the relevant part of the letter. Nor has he guided the reader by quoting the letter in the appendix. I quote below the relevant part:

"One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can, and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with Imperialism."

"He dreads much more than I do the success of Nazism and Fascism. I argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally."

I suggest the full quotation gives a meaning wholly different from that given by the author. The following passages from *Harijan* will further prove the baselessness of the charge of pro-Axis or "defeatist" tendency on my part:

Q.—"Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in the war?....."

A—“.....I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated.” (*Harijan*, June 7, 1942, p. 177)

“.....America is too big financially, intellectually and in scientific skill, to be subdued by any nation or even combination.....” (*Harijan*, June 7, 1942, p. 181)

22. A further complete answer to the same charge, if one were still needed, is furnished by my letter to Shrimati Miraben, dictated on the spur of the moment and never meant for publication. The letter was written to her in answer to her questions which carried to me her belief that the Japanese attack was imminent and that they were likely to have a walk-over. My answer leaves no doubt whatsoever as to my attitude.

The letter was written after the Allahabad meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. It was dictated by me to the late Shri Mahadev Desai. The original is in Shrimati Miraben's possession.

I know that she wrote a letter to Lord Linlithgow from this camp on December 24th last, sending copies of this correspondence and requesting its publication. She never received even an acknowledgment of her communication. I hope it was not pigeon-holed without so much as being read.

23. In view of the colourful description of my draft resolution sent to Allahabad, I reproduce opposite passages from the resolution, to show that the author has gone to everything connected with the Congress with the deliberate intention, as it seems to me, of seeing nothing but evil. Thus “Britain is incapable of defending India” is followed by these sentences :

“It is natural that whatever she (Britain) does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian Army has been maintained until now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. This policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.”

COMPLETE NON-CO-OPERATION WITH AGGRESSORS

24. Then there is this sentence taken from the draft : “If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan.” This has to be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs from the draft :

“This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore, the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation :—

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.
2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.
3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the efforts to resist him.
4. If he is dying of thirst and seeks out aid we may not refuse it.
5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting, our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

“At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore, not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither

may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

"Whilst non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of Swaraj consists in the millions of India wholeheartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exercise the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence."

I contend that from this setting it is impossible to infer pro-Japanese attitude or anti-British attitude on my part or that of the Working Committee. On the contrary there is determined opposition to any aggression and meticulous concern for the Allied arms. The demand for immediate freedom itself is born of that concern. If the search be for implacable opposition on my part to British Imperialism that search is superfluous, for it is patent in all my writings.

25. I would like to close this subject by quoting some passages from my speeches on the 7th. and 8th. August last.

Extracts from the Hindustani Speech of 7th. August.

Then, there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. They say they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British Imperialism and the British people. To them the two are one.

This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. This is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling.

Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their Imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture.

It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willynilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war, so long as we are not free.

I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must therefore purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are to-day in distress. My very friendship therefore demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes.

As I view the situation, they are on the brink of an abyss. It therefore becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh; nevertheless, that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody. The idea of taking advantage of the opponent's difficulty and utilising it for delivering a blow is entirely repugnant to me.

There is one thing which I would like you always to keep before your mind. Never believe that the British are going to lose the war. I know they are not a nation of cowards. They will fight to the last rather than accept defeat.

But suppose, for strategic reasons they are forced to leave India as they had to leave Malaya, Singapore, and Burma what shall be our position in that event? The Japanese will invade India and we shall be unprepared. Occupation of India by the Japanese will mean too the end of China and perhaps Russia. I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's and China's defeat.

Pandit Nehru was only to-day describing to me the wretched condition of Russia. He was agitated. The picture he drew still haunts me. I have asked myself the question, 'what can I do to help Russia and China?' And the reply has come from within, 'You are being weighed in the balance. You have in the alchemy of ahimsa a universal panacea. Why don't you give it a trial? Have you lost faith?'

Out of this agony has emerged the proposal for British withdrawal. It may

irritate the Britishers to-day and they may misunderstand me ; they may even look upon me as their enemy. But some day they will say that I was their true friend.

(From the Hindustani Speech on 8th August.)

After showing concern for China I said :

I therefore want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. It cannot now wait for the realisation of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices for attaining freedom will need to be much greater than would otherwise have been the case. The Congress has to win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. The freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for the whole of the Indian people.

(From the concluding speech in English on 8th August.)

It will be the greatest mistake on their (United Nations) part to turn a deaf ear to India's non-violent pleading and refuse her fundamental right of freedom. It will deal a mortal blow to Russia and China if they oppose the demand of non-violent India which is to-day, on bended knee, pleading for the discharge of a debt long overdue.....

I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet to-day you find me talking in strong language. My non-embarrassment plea, however, was always qualified by the proviso, "consistently with the honour and safety of the nation." If a man holds me by the collar and I am drowning, may I not struggle to free myself from the strangle-hold? Therefore, there is no inconsistency between our earlier declarations and our present demand.....

I have always recognised a fundamental difference between Fascism and the democracies despite their many limitations, and even between Fascism and British Imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get to-day is from an India which they hold in bondage.

Think, what a difference it would make if India were to participate in the war as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come, must come to-day. For she will utilise that freedom for the success of the Allies, including Russia and China. The Burma Road will once more be opened, and the way cleared for rendering really effective help to Russia.

Englishmen did not die to the last man in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. They effected instead, what has been described as a 'masterly evacuation.' But I cannot afford to do that. Where shall I go, where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this mass of humanity to be set aflame in the cause of world deliverance unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? To-day there is no life left in them. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre has to be restored to their eyes freedom has to come, not to-morrow but to-day. Congress must therefore pledge itself to do or die.

These quotations show clearly why I advised the Congress to make the demand for the withdrawal of British Power. The quotations also show that non-violence, i.e. self-suffering and self-sacrifice without retaliation was the key-stone of the movement.

26. The author has had difficulty in finding an adequate explanation for my agreement to the stationing of Allied troops in India in spite of the withdrawal of British power. If he had an open mind, there should have been no difficulty. My explanation was there. There was no occasion to doubt its sincerity unless there was positive evidence to the contrary. I have never claimed infallibility or a larger share of intellect for myself than the ordinary.

27. The author says that no "satisfactory solution" of the difficulty raised by Rajaji, namely that the stationing of the Allied forces, without the civil power being with the British Government, would be "reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form" was "ever made public by Mr. Gandhi." The author therefore suggests that "the solution was one which he (I) preferred should remain a secret," and he proceeds to say :

"Now while the details of Mr. Gandhi's personal solution of this problem must remain a matter for speculation, an explanation which fulfils the logical requirements of the above situation immediately comes to mind ; it is that, as has been shown above to be probable, Mr. Gandhi's admission of this amendment to his scheme was intended primarily as a bid for American support and secondarily as a sop to his opponents on the Working Committee, but that he envisaged, or planned to create, circumstances in which this permission would be meaningless, that is to say circumstances in which the troops would either be forced to withdraw, or would if they remained, be rendered ineffective."

It is difficult to characterise this suggestion. I take it that the secrecy suggested was to be secret even from the members of the Working Committee. If not, they would also become conspirators with me in the fraud to be perpetrated on the Allied powers.

Amazing consequences would flow from such a fraud. Assume that the British Government has shed all power in India, that by an agreement between the Free India Government and the Allied powers, their troops are stationed in India. This assumption carries with it the further assumption that the agreement has been arrived at without any pressure, violent or non-violent, and simply from the British recognition of the necessity of recognising the Independence of India.

Assume further that the secret has all this time remained buried in my bosom, and that I suddenly divulge it to the Free India Government and therefore to the world, and they carry out my plan to frustrate the terms of the agreement, what would be the result? The Allied Powers, having all the overwhelming military strength at their disposal, would forfeit my head to themselves—which would be the least—and would further let their righteous rage descend upon the Free India Government and put an end to Independence, which was won, not by military strength, but simply by force of reason, and therefore make it impossible, so far as they can, for India to regain such lost Independence.

I must not carry this train of thought much further. The author's suggestion, if it were true, would also conclusively prove that all of us conspirators were thinking, not of the deliverance of India from bondage or of the good of the masses, but only of our base little selves.

28. The difficulty pointed out by Rajaji and on which the writer has laid stress in order to infer 'secret motive' on my part was pointed out even more forcibly by another correspondent and I dealt with it in the issue of *Harijan* dated 19th July, 1942, pp. 232 and 233. As the whole of the article consists of questions and answers which have a bearing on the author's insinuations, I produce them without apology :—

TOLERANCE OF ALLIED TROOPS

Q. 1. If non-violent activity is naturalised by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here?

A. The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by Free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never has claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy.

And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstanding a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a Free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength.

The demand, therefore, is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right Act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain the moral status which could ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have reason to fight, is a question I need to consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case, my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted, therefore, that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance or aggression, with the

Allied troops operating in India as there is practically none now. For the troops are there to-day enjoying full mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

Q. 2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon armies which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate, during the duration of the war?

A. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my own terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

DEFENCE OF INDIA

Q. 3. Whatever be the terms of the 'treaty', if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the 'defence' of India, can Indians play anything but a minor and subordinate role in the defence of this country?

A. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal—voluntary and orderly or forced.

Q. 4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a 'treaty' under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession?

A. We assume their or rather British honesty. If would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their pledged word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough, non-violent or violent, to enforce fulfilment.

Q. 5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared 'independent' and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

A. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessors. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India from bondage. Therefore, Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

Q. 6. If the Congress, as Maulana Sahab has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only,' is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4,000 miles of coast line and no navy and ship-building industry?

A. Maulana Sahab, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

Q. 7. What material aid could India send to China to-day, even if she were declared 'independent' by the British?

A. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that Free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

Why has the author ignored the explanation, for instance, in answers 2 and 4 which was before him? Boiled down, my explanation means that I would trust the Allies to carry out faithfully the conditions of the contract to be fulfilled by them, just as I would expect them to trust the Government of Free India to carry out their part of the contract.

British withdrawal, whenever it comes, will carry with it so much honour

that everything to be done thereafter by either party will be done with the greatest goodwill and utmost sincerity. I hold that this solution of the difficulty presented is perfectly comprehensible and satisfactory.

NO "SECRET" METHODS

29. As to secrecy, this is what I said on the 8th. August in my Hindustani speech before the A. I. C. C. meeting:—

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C. I. D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle we have to work openly and to receive bullets in our chests, without running away. In a struggle of this character all secrecy is sin and must be punctiliously avoided.

It is somewhat hard for a man who has avoided secrecy as a sin to be accused of it, especially when there is no evidence whatsoever for the charge.

"SCORCHED EARTH"

30. The author proceeds:—

".....and it is no coincidence that at the same time as Mr. Gandhi was developing the 'Quit India' theme in *Harijan*, he was also inveighing against any form of 'scorched earth' policy (Mr. Gandhi's solicitude for the property, largely industrial property be it noted, which it might have been necessary to deny to the enemy, contrasts strangely with his readiness to sacrifice countless numbers of Indians in non-violent resistance to the Japanese. The property must be saved: it is perhaps legitimate to ask—for whom?)"

"The coincidence" is a gratuitous suggestion for which there is no proof. The suggestion behind the parenthetical gloss is evidently that I was more solicitous about the property of moneyed men than of the lives and property of the masses. This appears to me to be a wilful distortion of truth. I give the following quotations which show the contrary:—

"As a war resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is—out of a humanitarian motive. But in India's case there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's, India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are."

Harijan, March 22, 1942 p. 88

"There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me and sacrifice, as its root-meaning implies, presupposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennoble me.

"My questioner has missed the conditional expression 'if I must.' I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and therefore, I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course, a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property. But he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat."

(*Harijan*, April 12, 1942, p. 109.)

"So far there is solicitude only for the poor man's property. There is no mention of industrial property. I have also given my reasons, which I still hold to

be perfectly sound, for non-destruction of such property. I have found only one note in the issues of *Harijan* in my possession which refers to industrial property. It is as follows:

"Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil seed. I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes.....Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction."

(*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, p. 167.)

SOLICITUDE FOR THE MASSES

The reason is obvious. Here too, the solicitude is not for the owners, but for the masses who use food products and cloth produced in factories. It should also be remembered that I have all along written and even acted against both kinds of factories, in normal times, in the interests of village industries, my creed being to prefer the products of hand labour in which millions can be engaged, to those of factories in which only a few thousands or at best a few lacs can be employed.

31. Mark too the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution sent to Allahabad: "But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses." It is incomprehensible how the author could, in the face of the foregoing, distort truth as he has done.

32. In the same paragraph from which I have quoted the paranthetical remark of the author, I find the following:

"We have however his own admission that he could not guarantee that non-violent action would keep the Japanese at bay; he refers indeed to any such hope as an 'unwarranted supposition.'"

And this is cited to support the conclusion that in order to prevent India from becoming a battlefield between the Allied Nations and Japan I was prepared "to concede to their (Japanese) demands."

Let me quote where the phrase is taken from. In an article entitled "A Fallacy" in *Harijan* dated 5th, July, 1942, I have dealt with the following question addressed to me by a correspondent:

Q. "You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by our action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?"

My reply to this runs as follows:

A. "There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

"Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

"Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years."

(*Harijan*, July 5, 1942, p. 210.)

The supposition referred to here is my Correspondent's, namely that the non-violent force created by my action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw, will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also and, therefore, I should not have resiled from my original proposition that the British

Power should withdraw their troops from India. I have shown the absurdity of such a supposition made for the sake of preventing the retention of British troops. My belief in the power of non-violence is unchangeable, but I cannot put it before the British in order to prevent their use of India as a base if they consider it necessary for dealing with the Japanese menace.

GANDHIJI'S APPEAL TO JAPS

33. The author has further sought to strengthen his inference by quoting the following from my appeal to the Japanese.

"And we are in the unique position of having to resist an Imperialism that we detest no less than yours (the Japanese) and Nazism."

The author has conveniently omitted the sentences which follow and which instead of strengthening his inference would negative it altogether. These are the sentences.

"Our resistance to it (British Imperialism) does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly—but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

"But in this they need no aid from foreign Powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity, we should have done it as soon as the War broke out nearly three years ago. Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British Power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact, if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the Independence of India, a recognition of that Independence by Britain, should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

"I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and Imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarisation of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist's spirit and ambition. Personally, I fear that without declaring the Independence of India, the Allied Powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to nought. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognising 'now' the freedom of India and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

"To Britain and the allies, we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies, some other Power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds, however skilfully achieved.

"Even if you win, it will not prove that you were in the right, it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too unless they perform 'now' the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

"Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of Free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that, if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human being to robots.

"The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this" (*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, p 240 *et seq.*)

I have given this long quotation because I see that it is a complete answer to the author's insinuations, as it is also an open gate to the whole of my mind regarding the movement contemplated in the resolution of 8th August last.

INDIA'S FREEDOM MAIN CONCERN

But the author has many arrows in his quiver. For, in defence of his inference that I was prepared to "concede to their (Japanese) demands," he proceeds:

"Only in the grip of some dominant emotion would he (I) have contemplated such a capitulation. This emotion was, there seems little doubt, his desire to preserve India from horrors of war."

In other words, I would exchange Japanese rule for British.

My non-violence is made of sterner stuff. Only a jaundiced eye can read such an emotion in the face of the clearest possible writings in the *Harijan* that I would face all the horrors of war in order to end the horror of horrors which British domination is.

I am impatient of it because I am impatient of all domination. I am in "the grip" of only one "dominant emotion" and no other—that is India's Freedom.

The author has admitted this in the same breath that he has charged me with an unworthy emotion. He has thus condemned himself out of his own mouth.

34. At page 14 of the indictment the author says:

"In conclusion there are the famous words uttered by Mr. Gandhi at a Press Conference at Wardha, after the Working Committee had passed the resolution of July 14th which show clearly however at that early stage he was fully determined on a final struggle:—

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an OPEN REBELLION.

"There also lies the answer to those who have since accused Government of precipitating the crisis by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders, and have suggested that the period of grace referred to by Mr. Gandhi in his Bombay speech should have been utilised for negotiation. "There is no room left for withdrawal or negotiation," Mr. Gandhi has said a month earlier. Moreover, the Wardha resolution merely threatened a mass movement if the demands of Congress were not accepted. The Bombay resolution went further. It no longer 'threatened' a movement with the delay that that might entail. It 'sanctioned' the movement and if any further delay was intended, are there not at least good grounds for believing in the light of all that had been said, that it was to be used not for the purpose of negotiation but for putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution?"

OFFICIAL "DISTORTIONS"

I shall presently show that the "famous words" attributed to me are partly a distortion and partly an interpolation not to be found in the authentic report of the Wardha interview as published in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942. Let me quote in full the portion of the Wardha interview in which that part of the quotation which I claim is distorted appears in its correct form:

"Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?"

"They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or other. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British Power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognising the independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL. Either they recognise Independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered

the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore, whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war." (Capitals mine.) (*Harijan*, July, 1942, p. 233.)

The corresponding quotation in the indictment I reproduce below in capital letters:

"THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL OF NEGOTIATION."

I suggest that in the context from which this is torn and distorted, it is entirely out of place. I was answering the question: "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?" As an answer to the question, the sentence as it appears in *Harijan* "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal," is perfectly intelligible and harmonises with the sentences preceeding and succeeding.

35. The distorted sentence in the indictment has two others tacked on to it. They are: "There is no question of one more chance. After all is an open rebellion."

The underlining is the author's.

The two sentences are not to be found anywhere in the report of the interview as it appears in *Harijan*. "There is no question of one more chance, can have no place in the paragraph about negotiations with my approach to them as revealed in my answer. As to 'open rebellion', I have even at the Second Indian Round Table Conference used that expression coupled with the adjective non-violent. But it has no place anywhere in the interview.

36. I have taxed myself to know how the two sentences could have crept into the author's quotation. Fortunately on 26th June, while this reply was being typed there came the *Hindustan Times* file for which Shri Pyarelal had asked. In its issue of 15th July, 1942 there appears the following message:

A MISREPORT

Wardhaganj, July 14.

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation; either they recognise India's independence or they don't," said Mahatma Gandhi answering questions at a Press interview at Sevagram on the Congress resolution. He emphasised that what he wanted was not the recognition of Indian independence on paper, but in action.

Asked if his movement would not hamper war efforts of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."

On his attention being drawn to Mr. Amery's latest statement in the House of Commons, Mahatma Gandhi said: "I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to repetition of that language in stronger terms, but that cannot possibly delay the pace of the people or the group that is determined to go its way." Mahatma Gandhi added: "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an open rebellion."

Asked what form his movement would take, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The conception is that of a mass movement on the widest possible scale. It will include what is possible to include in a mass movement or what people are capable of doing. This will be a mass movement of a purely non-violent character."

Asked if he would court imprisonment this time Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is too soft a thing. There is no such thing as courting imprisonment this time. My intention is to make it as short and swift as possible."—A. P. I.

37. This message is an eye-opener for me. I have often suffered from misreporting or coloured epitomes of my writings and speeches even to the point of being lynched... This one, though not quite as bad, is bad enough.

The above A. P. summary gives, if it does, the clue to the author's source for the misquotation and the additional sentence. If he used that source the question arises why he went out of his way to use that doubtful and unauthorised source, when he had before him the authentic text of the full interview in *Harijan* of 19th July last. He has made a most liberal, though disjointed and biased use of the columns of *Harijan* for building up his case against me. At page 13 of the indictment he thus begins the charge culminating in the misquotation at page 14.

"From this point onwards Mr. Gandhi's conception of the struggle developed rapidly. His writings on the subject are too lengthy to quote in full, but the

following excerpts from *Harijan* illustrate the direction in which his mind was moving."

On the same page he has quoted passages from page 233 of *Harijan* from the report of the interview in question. I am therefore entitled to conclude that the question under examination was taken from *Harijan*. It is manifest now that it was not. Why not?

If he took the three sentences from the aforementioned A. P. report, why has he quoted them without asterisks between the sentences that appear apart in the A. P. report?

I may not pursue the inquiry any further. It has pained me deeply. How the two sentences not found in the authentic text of the interview found place in the A. P. summary I do not know. It is for the Government to inquire if they will.

GOVT. INVITED THE CRISIS

38. The author's quotation having been found wanting, the whole of his conclusions and inferences based upon it must fall to the ground. In my opinion, therefore, the Government does stand accused not only of 'having precipitated,' but of having invited, a crisis by their premeditated coup. The elaborate preparations they made for all-India arrests were not made overnight.

It is wrong to draw a distinction between the Wardha resolution and the Bombay one in the sense that the first only threatened and the second 'sanctioned' the mass civil disobedience. The first only required ratification by the All-India Congress Committee but the effect of either was the same i. e., both authorised me to lead and guide the movement if negotiations failed.

But the movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August last. Before I could function they arrested not only me but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I but the Government who started the movement and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt, it would have been 'short and swift,' not in the violent sense, as the author has insinuated, but in the non-violent sense as I know it.

The Government made it very short and very swift by their very violent action. Had they given me breathing time, I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand.

Thus there were no 'grounds,' good or bad for believing, as the author would have one believe, that the "period of grace" was to be used for "putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution." In order to sustain such a belief it has become necessary for the author to dismiss from consideration the whole of the proceedings of the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and even vital parts of its resolution—save the clause of referring to the mass movement—and the very awkward word 'non-violence' to which I shall come presently.

ANXIETY TO AVOID CONFLICT

39. I give below extracts from my speeches and writings to show how eager and earnest I was to avoid conflict and achieve the purpose by negotiation and to show that the Congress aim never was to thwart the Allies in any way:

"... It would be churlish on our part if we said 'we don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing Press representatives."

(*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, p. 243.)

NO ARBITRATION ON THE INDEPENDENCE ISSUE

Q: "Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of Independence?"

A: "No, not on the question of Independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of Independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question... But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice in my side—it can be done only if India's Independence is recognised."

(*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, p. 168.)

An English correspondent: "...Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem?"

A: "Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration....."

(*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, p. 168.)

"ACTUAL STRUGGLE NOT COMMENCED"

The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon H. E. the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the meanwhile? I will tell you. There is the spinning wheel, I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-point constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every-one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this Imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom before it comes physically. The chains of the slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: "I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth, instead of depending upon you, I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge of freedom and therefore I deem myself a free man."

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for Ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. May be he will propose the abolition of the salt tax, the drink evil, etc, but I will say, 'Nothing less than freedom.'

"DO OR DIE"

Here is a *Mantra*—a short one—that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *Mantra* is this: "We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery." Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your badge. Dismiss jails out of your consideration. If the Government leaves me free I shall spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life shall gain, he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the faint-hearted.

(From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August before the A. I. C. C.)

Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence to-day. I have yet to go through much ceremonial, as I have always to do and this time more than ever before—the burden is so heavy. I have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit for the time being.

From the concluding speech in English on 8th August before the A. I. C. C.)

40. At page 11 of the indictment the author says:

To summarise briefly, Mr. Gandhi did not believe that non-violence alone was capable of defending India against Japan. Nor had he any faith in the ability of the Allies to do so: 'Britain', he stated in his draft Allahabad resolution, 'is incapable of defending India.' His 'Quit India' move was intended to result in the withdrawal of the British Government to be succeeded by a problematical provisional Government or, as Mr. Gandhi admitted to be possible, by anarchy; the Indian army was to be disbanded; and Allied troops were to be allowed to operate only under the terms imposed by this provisional Government, assisted by India's non-violent non-co-operation to Japan, for which, as Mr. Gandhi had already admitted, there would be little scope with Allied troops operating in India.

"Finally, even if, in the face of the above arguments, it could be supposed that Mr. Gandhi and the Congress proposed to pin their faith on the ability of Allied troops to defend India, it should be noted that the former himself admitted that

the ability of Allied troops to operate effectively would depend upon the formation of a suitable provisional Government.

"Now since this Government was to be representative of all sections of Indian opinion, it is clear that neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Congress could legitimately commit it in advance to any particular course of action; they could not, that is to say, undertake that it would support the Allies in defending India against Japan. They could not, in fact, make any promise on behalf of this provisional Government unless they intended that it should be dominated by Congress; the whole trend of Congress policy, however, coupled with the extravagant promises made in the Bombay A. I. C. C. resolution on behalf of this provisional Government, leave little doubt that this was their intention, a view held, significantly, by the Muslim League and Muslims in general." You have then a situation in which the Allied troops would be dependent for support on a Government dominated by clique which has already been shown to be thoroughly defeatist in outlook, and whose leader had already expressed the intention of negotiating with Japan.

"It is not the intention here to examine the third aim, the establishment of communal unity followed by the formation of a provisional Government at all closely. It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and a note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India. It will suffice here to show, from Mr. Gandhi's own writings, the doubts that he entertained as to the feasibility of establishing any such Government."

"CRUEL MISREPRESENTATION"

This brief summary is a perfect caricature of all I have said or written, and the Congress has stood for and expressed in the resolution of 8th August last. I hope I have shown in the foregoing pages how cruelly I have been misrepresented. If my argument has failed to carry conviction, I should be quite content to be judged on the strength of the quotations interspersed in the argument.

As against the foregoing caricature, let me give a summary of my views based on the quotations referred to above.

1. I believe that non-violence alone is capable of defending India, not only against Japan but the whole world.

2. I do hold that Britain is incapable of defending India. She is not defending India to-day; she is defending herself and her interests in India and elsewhere. These are often contrary to India's.

3. 'Quit India' move was intended to result in the withdrawal of British Power and is possible with simultaneous formation of a provisional Government, consisting of members representing all the principal parties, if the withdrawal took place by the willing consent of the British Government. If, however, the withdrawal took place willy-nilly there might be a period of anarchy.

4. The Indian army would naturally be disbanded, being a British creation - unless it forms part of Allied troops, or it transfers its allegiance to the Free India Government.

5. The Allied troops would remain under terms agreed to between the Allied Powers and the Free India Government.

6. If India become free, the Free India Government would tender co-operation by rendering such military aid as it could. But in the largest part of India where no military effort was possible, non-violent action will be taken by the masses of the people with the utmost enthusiasm.

FREE INDIA AS AN ALLY

41. Then the summary comes to the provisional Government. As to this, let the Congress resolution itself speak. I give the relevant parts below:

"The A. I. C. C. therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British Power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional Government will be formed and Free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country.

"It will thus be a composite Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its

command, together with its allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people.

"This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a Federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

"Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under Free India, the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India."

NON-PARTY CHARACTER OF CONGRESS

I claim that there is nothing in this clause of the resolution that is 'extravagant' or impracticable. The concluding sentence proves in my opinion, the sincerity and non-party character of the Congress. And as there is no party in the country which is not wholly anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi and anti-Japan, it follows that a Government formed by these parties is bound to become an enthusiastic champion of the Allied cause which by the recognition of India as a free state will truly become the cause of democracy.

42. As to communal unity, it has been a fundamental plank with the Congress from its commencement. Its President is a Muslim divine of world wide repute, especially in the Muslim world. It has besides him three Muslims on the Working Committee.

It is surprising that the author has summoned to his assistance the Muslim League opinion. The League can afford to doubt the sincerity of Congress professions and accuse the Congress of the desire of establishing a "Congress-Hindu domination." It ill becomes the all-powerful Government of India to take shelter under the Muslim League wing.

This has a strong flavour of the old Imperial Mantra *Divide and Rule*.

League-Congress differences are a purely domestic question. They are bound to be adjusted when foreign domination ends, if they are not dissolved sooner.

43. The author winds up the second chapter as follows :

"Whether the authors of the resolution genuinely believed that the Congress demand would, if accepted, help rather than hinder the cause of the United Nations and intended that it should have that effect, depends on the answer to two questions. In the first place, could any body of men who honestly desired that result have deliberately called the country, if their way of achieving it was not accepted, to take part in a mass movement the declared object of which was to have precisely the opposite effect by paralysing the whole administration and the whole war effort? In the second place, bearing in mind that less than a year previously it had been proclaimed under Mr. Gandhi's orders to be a 'sin' to help the war with men or money, can it be denied that these men saw their opportunity in Britain's danger and believed that the psychological moment for the enforcement of their political demands must be seized while the fate of the United Nations hung in the balance and before the tide of war turned—if it was ever going to turn—in their favour? The answer to these two questions is left to the reader."

ADMINISTRATION'S "DEAD-SET AGAINST CONGRESS"

I have to answer these two questions both as reader and accused. As to the first question, there is no necessary inconsistency between the genuine belief that an acceptance of the Congress demand would help the cause of the United Nations i. e., of democracy all the world over and a mass movement (which moreover was merely contemplated) to paralyse the administration on non-acceptance of the Congress demand.

It is submitted that the attempt 'to paralyse the administration' on non-acceptance proves the genuineness of the demand which sets the seal on its genuineness by Congressmen preparing to die in the attempt to paralyse an administration that thwarts their will to fight the combine against democracy.

Thus it is the administration's dead-set against the Congress which proves the hollowness of its claim that it is engaged in a fight for democracy.

My firm belief is that the administration is daily proving its inefficiency for handling the war in the right manner. China is slowly pining away while the administration is playing at war handling. In the attempt to suppress the Congress it has cut off the greatest source of help to the millions of China who are being ground down under the Japanese heel.

44. The second question hardly demands a separate answer. Congressmen who proclaimed a year ago under my "orders" that it is a "sin" to help the war with "men and money" need not be considered here, if I give different "orders."

For me, I am as much opposed to all war to-day as I was before a year or more. I am but an individual. All Congressmen are not of that mind.

CONGRESS AND WAR ISSUE

The Congress will give up the policy of non-violence to-day, if it can achieve India's freedom by so doing. And I would have no compunction about inviting those who seek my advice to throw themselves heart and soul into the effort to help themselves and thus deliver from bondage those nations that are wedded to democracy. If the effort involves military training, the people will be free to take it, leaving me and those who think with me to our own non-violence.

I did this very thing during the Boer War, and in the last war, I was a "good boy" then, because my action harmonised with the British Government's wishes. To-day I am the arch enemy, not because I have changed but because the British Government, which is being tried in the balance is being found wanting.

I helped before, because I believed in British good faith. I appear to be hindering to-day because the British Government will not act up to the faith that was reposed in them.

My answer to the two questions propounded by the author may sound harsh, but it is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as God lets me see it.

GROSS MISQUOTATIONS—

45. The gravamen, however, of the charges against me is that "every reference to non-violence in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples and in the post arrest programmes and instructions is nothing more than a pious hope or at best a mild warning which was known to have no practical value." It is also described as mere "lip service."

46. The author gives no proof to show that it (the warning) "was known to have no practical value." If the references to non-violence are removed from my writing and my utterances in order to condemn me and my "Congress disciples" the removal would be on a par with the omission of 'note' from the Commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. The author in robbing me of the one thing I live by and live for robs me of all I possess.

The evidence given in support of dismissing references to non-violence as "valueless" mostly consists of innuendoes. "It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish in which foreign domination was to be ended cost what it may." In a non-violent struggle the cost has always to be paid by the fighters in their own blood.

"It was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift" the prefix 'un' in 'unarmed', unless it be regarded as 'valueless' gives 'short and swift' an ennobling meaning. For to make the struggle 'short and swift' prisons have to be avoided as too soft a thing and death to be hugged as a true friend enabling the fighters to affect the opponents' heart much quicker than mere jail going can.

—AND POST-FACTO MEANINGS

Mention by me of 'conflagration' meant giving of lives in thousands or more, if need be. The author has called it a 'grimly accurate forecast.'

This has a post-facto meaning unintended by the author in that a heavy toll of lives was taken by way of reprisals by the authorities, and an orgy of unmentionable excesses let loose upon the people by the soldiery and the police, if the press reports and statements by responsible public men are to be believed.

"Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots." It is true that I was prepared to take such a risk. Any big movement whether violent or non-violent involves certain risks. But non-violent running of risks means a special method, a special handling. I would have strained every nerve to avoid riots.

Moreover, my first act would have been to woo the Viceroy. Till then no question of running any risks could arise. As it was, the Government would not let me run the risk. They put me in prison instead!

What the mass movement was to include and how the risk was to be taken,

if at all, the author could not know for the movement was never started. Nor had any instructions been issued by me.

47. The author complains of my 'making full use of existing grievances'. The use began even before the birth of the Congress. It has never ceased. How could it, so long as the foreign domination, of which they were a part, lasted?

"AN UNPARDONABLE SUPPRESSION"

48. "Finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words or at least their sense finds a place in the resolution itself." This last sentence is a specimen of *suppressio veri*. Here is the relevant extract from the Congress resolution:

"They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India."

There is nothing new or startling in this. It is practical wisdom. Men and women must become their own leaders when their trusted guides are removed from them, or when their organisation is declared illegal or otherwise ceases to function.

True, there were formerly nominal 'dictators' appointed. This was more to court arrest than to guide followers by being in touch with them. For, touch was not possible except secretly.

This time, not prison, but death, was to be sought in the prosecution of the movement. Therefore, every one was to become his own leader to act within the four corners of the square foundation—non-violence.

The omission of the two conditions for every one becoming his or her own guide was an unpardonable suppression of relevant truth.

USE OF MILITARY TERMS IN NON-VIOLENCE

49. The author then proceeds to consider whether the movement contemplated by me could, by its very nature, be non-violent and further whether "Mr. Gandhi (I) intended that it should be so or hoped that it would remain so."

I have already shown that the movement never having been started, nobody could say what I had contemplated or hoped unless my intention or my hope could be justly deduced from my writings. Let me however observe how the author has arrived at this conclusion.

His first proof is that I have employed military terms in connection with a movement claimed to be wholly non-violent. I have employed such language from the commencement of my experiment in South Africa. I could more easily show the contrast between my move and the ordinary ones by using identical phraseology so far as possible, and coupling it with non-violence.

Throughout my experience of Satyagraha since 1908, I cannot recall an instance in which people were misled by my use of military phraseology. And, indeed, Satyagraha being a 'moral equivalent of war', the use of such terminology is but natural. Probably all of us have used at some time or another, or, are at least familiar with expressions such as 'sword of the spirit', 'dynamite of truth', 'shield and buckler of patience', 'assaulting the citadel of truth', or 'wrestling with God.' Yet no one has ever seen anything strange or wrong in such use.

ANALOGY OF THE SALVATION ARMY

Who can be ignorant of the use of military phraseology by the Salvation Army? That body has taken it over in its entirety, and yet I have not known anyone having mistaken the Salvation Army, with its Colonels and Captains, for a military organisation trained to the use of deadly weapons of destruction.

50. I must deny that "it has been shown that Mr. Gandhi had little faith in the effectiveness of non-violence to resist Japanese aggression." What I have said is that maximum effectiveness cannot be shown when it has to work side by side with violence.

It is true that Maulana Saheb and Pandit Nehru have doubts about the efficacy of non-violence to withstand aggression, but they have ample faith in non-violent action for fighting against British domination. I do believe that both British and Japanese Imperialisms are equally to be avoided. But I have already

shown by quoting from *Harijan* that it is easier to cope with the evil that is than the one that may come.

51. I admit at once that there is "a doubtful proportion of full believers" in my "theory of non-violence." But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence, full or imperfect. It is enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action.

NON-VIOLENT RECORD OF CIVIL RESISTANCE

52. Now comes the author's most glaring lapse of memory or misrepresentation in the paragraph under discussion. He says, ".....remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence"

I have before me a list 20 civil resistance movements beginning with the very first in South Africa. I do recall instances in which popular frenzy had broken out resulting in regrettable murders. These instances of mob violence, though bad enough, were but a flea-bite in proportion to the vast size of this country—as big as Europe less Russia territorially and bigger numerically.

Had violence been the Congress policy, secretly or openly, or had the Congress discipline been less strict, it is simple enough to realise that the violence instead of being a flea-bite, would have been more like a volcanic eruption.

But every time such outbreaks took place the most energetic measures were taken by the whole Congress organisation to deal with them. On several occasions I had myself resorted to fasting. All this produced a salutary effect on the popular mind.

And there were also movements which were singularly free from violence. Thus the South African Satyagraha, which was a mass movement and similar movements in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad—not to mention others in which collective civil disobedience on a wide scale was offered—were wholly free from any outburst of violence.

In all these the people had conformed to the rules laid down for their observance. The author has thus gone against history in making the sweeping statement that I had before me the "example of previous movements each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence."

My own experience being quite to the contrary, I have not the shadow of a doubt that if the Government had not, by their summary action unnecessarily provoked the people beyond endurance, there never would have been any violence.

VIOLENCE RULED OUT BY WORKING COMMITTEE

The members of the Working Committee were anxious that violence on the part of the people should be avoided, not from any philanthropic motive, but from the conviction borne in upon them the experience of hard facts, that violence by the people could not usher in independence.

The education that the people had received through the Congress was wholly non-violent, before 1920, because of the leaders' belief in constitutional agitation and faith in British promises and declarations, and since 1920, because of the belief, in the first instance induced by me and then enforced by experience, that mere constitutional agitation, though it had served up to a point, could never bring in independence, and that regard being had to the condition of India, non-violent action was the only sanction through which independence could be attained in the quickest manner possible.

SATYAGRAHA—THE WORLD'S HOPE

The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the down-trodden portion of humanity.

I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for his peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past.

It is therefore sad to think that a Government, the most powerful in the world, should have belittled the doctrine and put its votaries, however imperfect they may be, out of action. "It is my firm opinion that thereby they have injured the cause of universal peace and the Allied Nations.

53. For the author "the certainty" was "that his (my) movement could not remain non-violent". For me "the certainty" was quite the contrary, if the movement had remained in the hands of those who could guide the people.

54. It is also now "clear" what I meant when I said I was prepared to go to the extremist limit, that is that I would continue the non-violent movement even though the Government might succeed in provoking violence. Hitherto I have stayed my hand when people have been so provoked.

This time I ran the risk because the risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration known to history was infinitely greater. If non-violence be the greatest force in the world, it must prove itself during this crisis.

REPLY TO CHARGE OF "LIP SERVICE"

55. The final proof given by the author of my non-violence being "mere lip service" consists of the following caricature of my writing in defence of Polish bravery.

"In other words, in any fight the weaker of the two combatants may employ as violent measures as he likes or is able, and may still be considered to be fighting non-violently; or to put it in another way, violence when employed against superior odds automatically becomes non-violence. Surely a very convenient theory for the rebels in an 'unarmed revolt'."

I claim the writing quoted by the author does not warrant the misleading deduction. How can I possibly lay down a proposition against everyday experience?

There is rarely a fight among absolute equals. One party is always weaker than the other. The illustrations I have given taken together, can lead to one conclusion only, namely that the weaker party does not make any preparation for offering violence for the simple reason that the intention is absent, but when he is suddenly attacked he uses unconsciously, even without wishing to do so, any weapon that comes his way.

The first illustration chosen by me is that of a man who having a sword, uses it singlehanded against a horde of dacoits. The second is that of a woman using her nails and teeth or even a dagger in defence of her honour. She acts spontaneously. And the third is that of a mouse fighting a cat with its sharp teeth. These three illustrations were specially chosen by me in order to avoid illegitimate deduction being drawn in defence of offering studied violence.

One infallible test is that such a person is never successful in the sense of overpowering the aggressor. He or she dies and saves his or her honour rather than surrender to the demands of the aggressor. I was so guarded in the use of my language that I described the defence of the Poles against overwhelming numbers as "almost non-violence."

57. Having given proof against me to show that my professions about non-violence were "valueless" the author turns to my colleagues in the Congress High Command to observe how they interpreted my "views to their Congress followers and to their masses."

STUDENTS AND THE CONGRESS

The author sees objection in Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankarrao Deo having singled out the student community for attention. Attention paid to the student community and peasantry was no new thing introduced for the first time for the sake of the struggle on the history of the Congress. As early as 1920 students were specially invited to join the non-co-operation movement and several thousands had responded to the call by suspending their studies.

I do not know what happened after the August arrests, in the Benares Hindu University. But assuming that some students belonging to it went away, that is no ground for associating Pandit Nehru with their acts. Positive proof would be necessary to establish such connection.

Overwhelming proof can be produced in support of the contention that his faith in non-violence for the purpose of achieving Swaraj is inferior to nobody's. The same thing can be said about his exhortation to the Kisans of the United Provinces. There is, too, nothing in favour of violence in the other leaders' speeches so far as one can judge from the extracts given in the indictment.

THE "DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS"

58. Having dealt with the leaders' speeches the author comes to the 'detailed instructions regarding the conduct of the movement in existence before the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay.' The 'first example' has been 'chosen'

from *Harijan* of August 9th. The article is entitled 'Ways of non-violent non-co-operation.' As it happens, it is a discussion in connection with the threatened invasion from Japan. Thus the article opens :

"Ever since 1920 we are familiar with some of the ways of offering non-violent non-co-operation. These included boycott of all Government institutions and services and extended to the non-payment of taxes. They were directed against a foreign Government in occupation of the country for years. The ways of non-co-operation to adopt against a new foreign invader would naturally differ in details. It would, as Gandhiji has said, extend to the refusal of food or water. All non-co-operation calculated to make the functioning of the enemy impossible, has to be resorted to."

Then the writer of the article (M. D.) has given samples of non-violent non-co-operation offered elsewhere than in India. They are not examples of non-violence consciously exercised. That the whole article was written to show what could be non-violently done to repel the invader, is clear from the final paragraph :

"What one has to remember is that, in war, repression would be ten times as severe as was resorted to in France but if there is the will to suffer, the resourcefulness to devise ways and means on the lines indicated in these different instances of passive resistance and above all the determination to drive out the invader, cost what it may, victory is certain. The vastness of our country, far from being a disadvantage, may be an advantage as the invader would find it difficult to cope with resistance on a thousand and one fronts.

NO VIOLENT INTENTION

59. The other example given by the author is an extract from an article by Shri K. G. Mashruwalla in *Harijan* of 23rd August, 1942. Shri Mashruwalla is a valued co-worker. He carries non-violence to an extreme which baffles those who know him intimately.

Nevertheless I do not propose to defend the paragraph quoted. He has guarded himself by saying that it represents his personal opinion only. He must have heard me debating the question whether interference with bridges, rails and the like could be classified as non-violent. I had always questioned the practicability of the interference being non-violent. Even if such interference could conceivably be non-violent, as I hold it can be, it is dangerous to put it before the masses who cannot be expected to do such things non-violently. Nor would I expect the British Power in the same category as the Japanese for the purposes of the movement.

60. Having allowed myself to criticise the opinion of a respected colleague, I wish to say that Shri Mashruwalla's opinion is no evidence of violent intention. At best it is an error of judgment which is much more likely in a novel subject like the applicability of "ahimsa" practised in all walks of life by masses of mankind. Great generals and statesmen have been known before now to have committed errors of judgment without losing caste or being accused of evil intentions.

THE ANDHRA CIRCULAR

61. Then comes the Andhra circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole. This is its governing clause:

"The whole movement is based on non-violence. No act which contravenes these instructions should ever be undertaken. All acts of disobedience committed should be overt never covert (open but not under cover)."

The parenthesis is in the original. The following warning is also embodied in the circular:

"Ninety-nine chances out of hundred chances are for the inauguration of this movement by Mahatmaji at an early date, possibly a few hours after the next All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay. The D. C. C.'s should be alert and begin to act immediately, but please also take note that no movement should be launched or any overt act done till Mahatmaji decides. After all they may decide otherwise and you will be responsible for a great unwarranted mistake. Be ready, organise at once, be alert, but by no means act."

As to the body of the circular, I could not make myself responsible for some of the lines. But I must refuse to judge a thing which I cannot correct especially in the absence of what the Committee has to say on them, assuming of course that the circular is an authentic document. I miss in the indictment the text of an alleged written amendment raising the ban on the removal of rails.

62. Attention is then drawn to the fifth appendix showing how my mind was working in the direction of violence under the 'valueless' cover of nonviolence, as the author would say. The appendix gives what purports to be the All-India Congress Committee's instructions with extracts from my writings in parallel columns.

"NON-VIOLENCE AS I KNOW IT"

I have tried to study that appendix. I have nothing to withdraw from my writings. And I contend that there is not a trace of violence in the instructions alleged to be from All-India Congress Committee

63. Independently of the argument in the indictment, I must now say something about non-violence as I know it. Its spread in all walks of life has been my mission from early youth. This covers a period of very nearly sixty-years. It was adopted at my instance as a policy by the Congress in 1920.

In its very nature it was meant to be paraded before the world, but it was accepted as a means indispensable for the attainment of Swaraj. Congressmen saw at an early date that its mere adoption on paper had no value. It was of use only in so far as it was put into practice individually and collectively. It was of no more use as a badge than a rifle in the hands of a person who did not know how to use it effectively on due occasion. Therefore if non-violence has raised the Congress prestige and popularity since its adoption, it has done so in exact proportion to its use, even as the power which the rifle gives to its possessor is in exact proportion to its effective use.

The comparison cannot be carried very far. Thus while violence is directed towards the injury, including the destruction, of the aggressor, and is successful only when it is stronger than that of the opponent, non-violent action can be taken in respect of an opponent, however powerfully organised for violence.

Violence *per se* of the weak has never been known to succeed against the stronger in violence. Success of non-violent action of the very weak is a daily occurrence. I make bold to say that I have applied to the present struggle the principles of non-violence as enunciated here. Nothing could be farther from my thought than injury to the person or property of those who are manning and regulating the machinery of British Imperialism as it operates in India.

My non-violence draws a fundamental distinction between the man and his machine. I would destroy a harmful machine without compunction, never the man. And this rule I have enforced in my dealings with my nearest relatives as also friends and associates not without considerable success.

AIMS OF WARDHA RESOLUTION

64. After disposing of non-violence the author has summarised what he calls the 'ostensible aims' of the Wardha resolution of July 14th, and the Bombay resolution of August 8th, as follows:

Three main ostensible aims are common to both the Wardha resolution of July 14th. (Appendix III-1) and the Bombay resolution of August 8th. (Appendix III-2.)

These are :

(1) To remove foreign domination over India.

(2) To check the growing ill-will against Britain, with its danger of passive acceptance by the masses of aggression against India; to build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians; and by granting India's millions immediate freedom to release that energy and enthusiasm which alone can enable India to play an effective part in her own defence and in her war as a whole.

(3) To achieve communal unity by the removal of the foreign power with its policy of divide and rule, which will be followed by the formation of a provisional Government representative of all sections of the Indian people.

Three further aims appeared for the first time in the Bombay resolution :

(4) To bring all subject and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations, thus giving these nations the moral and spiritual leadership of the world.

(5) To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to regain their freedom and to ensure that they are not again placed under the rule of any colonial power.

(6) To bring about a world federation which would ensure the disbanding of the national armies, navies and air forces, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all.

He says that "the genuineness of the first of these aims is undeniable. The freedom of India in whatever terms it may have been expressed, has long been

238 CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISTURBANCES [DETENTION CAMP—

the main goal of the Congress and it has been shown above how this aim coincides with one of the main motives underlying the 'Quit India' move."

Strange, as it appears to me, notwithstanding this admission of the genuineness of the first aim, he ridicules the others in some shape or form. I contend that all the others follow from the first.

Thus if the foreign domination goes by agreement, ill-will against Britain is automatically turned into goodwill and the energy of millions is set free on behalf of the Allied cause.

Similarly, communal unity must follow as day follows night when the night of foreign domination is gone. If nearly four hundred million people become free, other portions of oppressed humanity must also become free and naturally the Allied Nations being privy to this freedom, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world comes to them without seeking.

The fifth aim is included in the fourth, and the sixth is but a repetition of the aim of the whole of humanity which it must attain or perish without.

It is true that the three last aims were added in Bombay. That surely is not a matter to cavil at. Even if they were a result of criticism, what is there wrong about it? No democratic organisation can afford to defy criticism, for it has to live upon the fresh air of criticism. As a matter of fact, however, world federation and rights of non-White people are not new ideas for Congressmen. They have been mentioned in Congress resolutions on other occasions. The paragraph about world federation found place in the August resolution at the instance of a European friend and about non-White people at mine.

65. As to the disturbances that took place after the arrests of 9th August I have carefully read chapters IV and V of the indictment detailing them as also the appendices purporting to be instructions from various bodies. I must refuse to judge these one-sided statements or unverified documents.

As to the so-called instructions, I can say that, so far as they are contrary to non-violence, they can never have my approval.

OMISSION OF REFERENCE TO GOVT. REPRISALS

66. One searches in vain in the indictment for a detailed account of the measures taken by the Government by way of reprisals. And if one is to believe what has been allowed to appear in the press about these measures, the so-called misdeeds of exasperated people, whether they can be described as Congressmen or not, pale into insignificance.

ARRESTS OF LEADERS THE CAUSE

The most natural way to look at the disturbances is that they broke out after the arrests, which were, therefore, the cause. The indictment has been framed for the sole purpose, as the title shows, of fastening the responsibility on the Congress. The argument seems to me to be this. First, I and then the Congress had been setting the stage for a mass movement since April, 1942, when I first bruited the idea of British withdrawal, popularly known as "Quit India." A mass movement was bound to result in the outbreak of violence. I and the Congressmen who had accepted my guidance had intended that violence should take place. Leaders had been preaching it. Hence the disturbances were to take place in any case. The arrests, therefore, merely anticipated that violent movement and nipped it in the bud. This sums up the reasoning the indictment.

"WOULD HAVE STRAINED TO MAKE NEGOTIATIONS SUCCESSFUL"

I have endeavoured to show that no special stage for a mass movement was set or contemplated because of my proposal for British withdrawal, that violence was never contemplated by me or any Congress leader, that I had declared that, if Congressmen indulged in an orgy of violence, they might not find me alive in their midst, that the mass movement was never started by me, that the sole charge of starting it was vested in me, that I had contemplated negotiations with the Government, that I was to start the movement only on failure of negotiations and that I had envisaged an interval of "two or three weeks" for the negotiations. It is, therefore, clear that, but for the arrests, no such disturbances would have taken place as happened on 9th August last and after. I would have strained every nerve, first, to make the negotiations successful and secondly, if I had failed, to avoid disturbances. The Government would have been no less able to suppress them than they were in August last. Only they would have had some cause against me and the Congress.

It was the duty of the Government, before taking action, to study the speeches

of the Congress leaders and myself at the All-India Congress Committee meeting. The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent, if only because they knew that no violent movement, in the existing circumstances, could possibly succeed when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people, whether Congressmen or others, was therefore committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise by the Government it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. But why seek to shift the responsibility, when the cause is patent? The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the populace, which was in sympathy with the Congress, lost self-control. The loss of self-control cannot imply Congress complicity, but it does imply that the power of endurance of human nature has limitations. If Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature, its authors were responsible for the explosions that followed. But the Government may assert that the arrests were necessary. If so, why should the Government fight shy of taking the responsibility for the consequences of their action? The wonder to me is that the Government, at all, need to justify their action when they know their will is law.

GOVT. AUTOCRACY VS. CONGRESS DEMOCRACY

Let me analyse the system of Government in vogue here. A population numbering nearly 400 millions of people, belonging to an ancient civilisation, are being ruled by a British representative called Viceroy and Governor General, aided by 250 officials called Collectors and supported by a strong British garrison with a large number of Indian soldiers, trained by British officers, and carefully isolated from the populace. The Viceroy enjoys within his own sphere powers much larger than the King of England. Such powers, as far as I know, are not enjoyed by any other person in the world. The Collectors are miniature Viceroy's in their own spheres. They are first and foremost, as their name implies, collectors of revenue in their own districts and have magisterial powers. They can requisition the military to their aid when they think necessary. They are also Political Agents for the small Chieftains within their jurisdiction, and they are in the place of overlords to them.

Contrast this with the Congress, the most truly democratic organisation in the world—not because of its numerical strength, but because its only sanctions deliberately adopted is non-violence. From its inception, the Congress has been a democratic body, seeking to represent all India. However feeble and imperfect the attempt may have been, the Congress has never in its history of now nearly sixty years shifted its gaze from the pole star of India's freedom. It has progressed from stage to stage in its march towards democracy in the truest term. The Congress learnt the spirit of democracy from Great Britain. No Congressman would care to deny the statement, though it must be added that the roots were to be found in the old panchayat system. It can never brook Nazi, Fascist or Japanese domination. An organisation whose very breath is freedom, and which pits itself against the most powerfully organised imperialism, will perish to a man in the attempt to resist all domination. So long as it clings to non-violence, it will be uncrushable and unconquerable.

"QUIT INDIA"—A CRY OF ANGUISH

What can be the cause of the extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves? I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. Does the causelle in the "Quit India" formula? The disturbances cannot be the cause, because the resentment began to show itself soon after the publication of my proposal for British withdrawal. It crystallized into the wholesale arrests of 9th August last which were pre-arranged and merely awaited the passing of the resolution on 8th August. Yet there is nothing novel in the resolution save the "Quit India" formula. Mass movements have been known to be on the Congress programme ever since 1920. But freedom seemed elusive. Now the Hindu-Muslim disunity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the Scheduled Classes, now the vested interests of Europeans, barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well. The sands of time were running out, rivers of blood were flowing fast among the warring nations, and politically-minded India was looking on helplessly—the masses were inert. Hence the cry of "Quit India." It gave body to the freedom movement. The cry was unanswerable. Those who were anxious to play their part in the world crisis found vent in that cry of anguish. Its root is in the will to save democracy from Nazism as well as Imperialism.

For, satisfaction of the Congress demand meant assurance of victory of democracy over any combination of reactionary forces and deliverance of China and Russia from the menace of Japan and Germany respectively but the demand irritated the Government. They distrusted those who were associated with the demand and thereby they themselves became the greatest impediment to the war effort. It is wrong, therefore, to accuse the Congress of hindering war effort. Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of the 9th saw the Congress imprisoned. What followed was a direct result of the Government action.

SINCERITY OF GOVERNMENT'S PROFESSIONS DOUBTED

The resentment over what I hold to be a just and honourable desire confirms the popular suspicion about the *bonafides* of the Government's professions about democracy and freedom after the war. If the Government were sincere, they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. Congressmen, who have been fighting for India's liberty for over half a century, would have flocked to the Allied banner as one man for the defence of India's freedom newly won. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner and ally. They put out of action those who made this demand. Some of them are even being hounded as if they were dangerous criminals. I have in mind Shri Jai Prakash Narayan and others like him. A reward of Rs. 5,000, now doubled, has been promised to the informant who would show his hiding place. I have taken Shri Jai Prakash Narayan purposely as my illustration because, as he very rightly says, he differs from me on several fundamentals. But my differences, great as they are, do not blind me to his indomitable courage and his sacrifice of all that a man holds dear for the love of his country. I have read his manifesto which is given as an appendix to the indictment. Though I cannot subscribe to some of the views expressed therein, it breathes nothing but burning patriotism and his impatience of foreign domination. It is virtue of which any country would be proud.

ACTION AGAINST CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS CRITICISED

So much for politically-minded Congressmen. In the constructive department of the Congress also Government have deprived themselves of the best talent in the country for the organisation of hand industries which are so vital a need in wartime. The All-India Spinners' Association, which is responsible for having distributed without fuss over three crores of rupees as wages among the poor villagers whom no one had reached and whose labour was being wasted, has come in for a heavy hand. Its President, Shri Jajaji, and many of his co-workers have been imprisoned without trial and without any known reason. Khadi centres, which are trust property, have been confiscated to the Government. I do not know the law under which such property can be confiscated and the tragedy is that the confiscators are themselves unable to run these centres which were producing and distributing cloth. Khadi and charkhas have been reported to have been burnt by the authorities. The All-India Village Industries Association worked by the Kumarappa brothers has also received much the same treatment. Shri Vinoba Bhave is an institution by himself. Many workers were incessantly doing creative labour under his guidance. Most men and women of constructive organisations are not political workers. They are devoted to constructive work of the highest merit. And if some of them have found it necessary to appear at all on the political field, it is a matter for the Government to reflect upon. To put such organisations and their supervisors under duress is in my opinion an unpardonable interference with war effort.

The self-satisfaction with which the highest officials proclaim that limitless men and material are being had from this unhappy land, is truly amazing, while the inhabitants of India are suffering from shortage of food, clothing and many other necessities of life. I make bold to say that this scarcity would have been largely minimised, if not altogether obviated, if instead of imprisoning Congress workers throughout India, the Government had utilised their services. The Government had two striking illustrations of the efficient working by the Congress agency—I mean the handling of the disastrous Bihar earthquake by Congress under Dr. Rajendra Prasad and of the equally disastrous flood in Gujarat under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

"WITHDRAW THE INDICTMENT"

This brings me to the end of my reply to the indictment. It has become much longer than I had wanted to make it. It has cost me and my co-workers

in the camp no end of labour. Although I must ask, in fairness to myself and the cause I represent, for the publication of this reply, my chief purpose is to carry conviction to the Government that the indictment contains no proof of the allegations against the Congress and me. The Government know that the public in India seem to have distrusted the indictment and regarded it as designed for foreign propaganda. Men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Rt. Hon. Shri M. R. Jayakar have given their opinion that the "evidence" produced in the indictment is of no judicial value. Therefore, the Government should withdraw the indictment, I see from the preface to the indictment that the Government have in their possession "valuable evidence," presumably incriminating the detenus I submit that, if the Government cannot safely divulge the evidence, they should discharge the detenus and bring to book those who, after discharge, may be caught in the act of committing or promoting crimes. With limitless power at their back, they need not resort to unsustainable accusations.

It will be noticed that, although the indictment is a Government publication, I have only criticised its unknown author in the fond hope that the individual members composing the Government of India have not read the originals on which it is based. For, I am of opinion that no one having a knowledge of the originals could possibly endorse the inferences and innuendoes with which it is replete.

Lastly, I wish to state that, if I have anywhere erred in analysing the indictment and if my error is pointed out to me, I shall gladly correct myself. I have simply written as I have felt.

I am, Yours sincerely, M. K. Gandhi.

Gandhi—Tottenham Correspondence

Sir R. Tottenham's Letter

The following further letters were exchanged on the reply :

Home Department, October 14th. 1943.

Sir,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 15th. July in which you have attempted to controvert certain passages appearing in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43." At the outset, I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your own request and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it. Since, however, you have thought fit to address Government on the subject, I am to say that Government have given due consideration to your letter.

"DEFEATIST OUTLOOK TOWARDS JAP THREAT"

Government regret to observe that although your letter contains lengthy quotations from your own utterances and writing, it contains no fresh or categorical statement of your own attitude in regard to the material issues or any clear repudiation of the disastrous policy to which you and the Congress Party committed yourselves in the series of events leading up to the Congress resolution of the 8th. August, 1942. The purpose of your letter appears to be to suggest that you have been misrepresented in some way in "Congress Responsibility," but in what substantial respect is not clear. No attempt was made in the book, as you seem to think, to charge you with pro-Japanese sympathies and the sentence at the end of the first chapter, to which you have taken exception in paragraph 18 of your letter, was merely an echo of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's own words quoted on the previous page. He has not, as you wrongly allege, repudiated those words in the published statement to which you refer. It was, however, one of the purposes of the book to find an explanation of your actions in your own defeatist outlook towards the threat from Japan and your fear that, unless the Allied forces withdrew in time, India would become a battle-field in which the Japanese would ultimately win. This feeling was attributed to you by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in the course of his remarks to which

reference has been made above and your own draft of the Allahabad resolution makes it plain that, both in the "Quit India" campaign and the Congress resolution which was intended to enforce it, your object was to be left in a position in which you and the Congress would be free to make terms with Japan. The Government of India note that your letter makes no attempt to meet this imputation, which they still regard as true. It is the only explanation which is consistent with your own statement that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait." Nor have you been able to explain on any theory other than that suggested in the book the contradiction between this statement and your subsequent avowal of your willingness to permit the retention of Allied troops on Indian soil.

GANDHIJI ACCUSED OF "INCREDIBLE LEVITY"

The Government of India are not disposed to follow you into the various verbal points that you have raised. They do not deny that, owing to your habit of reinterpreting your own statements to suit the purposes of the moment, it is easy for you to quote passages from your utterances or writings which are in apparent contradiction to any view attributed to you. But the fact that you admit the discovery of important gaps in them or that you have found it necessary from time to time to put glosses on what you have said, is itself evidence of the incredible levity with which, in a moment of grave crisis, you made pronouncements in regard to matters of the most vital importance to India's defences and her internal peace. Government can only interpret your statements in the plain sense of the words as it would appear to any honest or unbiassed reader and they are satisfied that the book "Congress Responsibility" contains no material misrepresentation of the general trend of your utterances during the relevant period.

REFERENCE TO "OPEN REBELLION"

You have devoted considerable space in your letter to an apparent attempt to disown the phrase attributed to you in the A. P. I. report of a press conference which you held at Wardha on the 14th July 1942, where you are reported to have said: "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an open rebellion." This press message was reproduced at the time by newspapers throughout India. You now wish the Government of India to believe that you first became aware of it on the 26th June, 1943. They can only regard it as highly improbable that, if it did not correctly represent what you said, it should not have been brought to your notice at the time or that you should have left it uncontradicted during the following weeks while you were still at liberty.

The Government of India also note that you still seek to cast on the Government the responsibility for the disturbances for reasons which they can only regard as trivial and which have already been answered in your published correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy. The point which is clearly established by the book "Congress Responsibility" is that those disturbances were the natural and predictable consequence of your declaration of an "open rebellion" and the propaganda which preceded it. That you yourself could have foreseen those consequences is clear from the statement which you yourself made in court in 1922 when you admitted the impossibility of dissociating yourself from the "diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura and the mad outrages of Bombay" and went on to say that you knew that you were playing with fire, but you had taken the risk and would do so again. If you now contend that the consequences were unintended and unforeseen, this fact is itself an admission of your own inability to judge the reactions of your followers. You now seek to excuse, if not to defend, the barbarities committed in your own name and that of the Congress rather than to condemn them. It is clear where your sympathies lie. Your letter does not contain one word of explanation of your own message "Do or die," nor does it throw any light on your message, quoted in Appendix X of the book, which, if you cannot disown it, is sufficient to refute your contention that no movement had been launched by you at the time when the disturbances took place.

I am finally to refer to your request for the publication of your letter. In the first place, I am to remind you of your own position, which has already been explained to you, viz., that so long as the grounds for your detention remain unchanged, Government are not prepared to afford you any facilities for communication with the general public nor are they prepared themselves to act as agents for your propaganda. In the second place, I am to point out that you had ample opportunities during the months preceding the Congress Resolution of the 8th August 1942 to make your meaning unequivocally clear before you were arrested.

The fact that your own followers interpreted your intentions in the same way as Government leaves no scope for further explanations. I am to inform you, therefore, that Government do not propose to publish your letter unless and until they think fit. This decision is, however, without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communications which you have voluntarily addressed to them.

To the extent that your present letter may be designed to relieve you of responsibility for the Congress rebellion and the connected events that have taken place, Government regret that they cannot accept it as in any way relieving you of that responsibility, or, indeed, to their regret, as a serious attempt to justify yourself. They observe again with regret that you have taken no step in your letter to dissociate yourself personally from the Congress Resolution of 8th August 1942; they condemn unequivocally the violent outrages which took place in your name after the passing of that resolution; to declare yourself unequivocally in favour of the use of all the resources of India for the prosecution of the war against the Axis Powers and in particular Japan, until victory is won; or to give satisfactory assurances for good conduct in the future. And in the absence of any sign of any change of mind on your part and of any disclaimer of the policy as the result of which it has been necessary to restrain your movements and those of the Working Committee of the Congress they are unable to take any further action on your present communication.

I am, etc.,
R. Tottenham.

Gandhi's Reply

October 26th. 1943.

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant received on 18th instant.

Your letter makes it clear that my reply to the charges brought against me in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43" has failed in its purpose, namely, to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

I observe too that the Government did not desire "comments" upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last, unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India's freedom.

DESIRE TO DISCUSS WITH WORKING COMMITTEE

As to the Congress Resolution of 8th August 1942, apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution, i.e., the All-India Congress Committee, which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware, I offered to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I have thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government stand-point. Hence I repeat my offer. But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a Satyagrahi, however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that, when India's millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th. July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last terrible flood in Gujerat and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge palace in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

REFER CHARGES TO AN IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL

As to "satisfactory assurances" about my "good conduct" I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called 'Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43.' And since I have not only denied the charges *in toto* but on the contrary have ventured to bring counter-charges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organisation and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and—or futile.

Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th. July last should, in fairness to me, be published, you inform me that their decision in this matter, however, "is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them." I can only hope that this does not mean that, as in the case of the "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43," garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am
M. K. Gandhi.

Request for Meeting With Colleagues Rejected

Home Department,
November 18th, 1943.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of October 26th, I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress Resolution of August 8th, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are well aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained.

I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted.

I, am etc.
R. Tottenham.

Stoppage of Letter to Mr. Jinnah

GANDHIJI'S COMPLAINT TO SIR R. TOTTENHAM

Following are letters exchanged between Mr. Gandhi and the Home Department on the interception of his letter to Mr. Jinnah :

May 27th, 1943.

Dear Sir Richard Tottenham.

I received last evening your letter of the 24th. instant refusing my request to forward my letter addressed to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah. I wrote only yesterday to the Superintendent of this camp asking him kindly to inquire whether my letter to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, and later, one dated the 15th. instant, to Right Honourable Lord Samuel had been forwarded to the respective addresses.

I am sorry for the Government's decision. For my letter to the Quaid-e-Azam was sent in reply to his public invitation to me to write to him and I was especially encouraged to do so because his language had led me to think that if I wrote to him, my letter would be forwarded to him. The public too are anxious that the Quaid-e-Azam and I should meet or at least establish contact. I have always been anxious to meet the Quaid-e-Azam, if perchance we could devise some solution of the communal tangle which might be generally acceptable. Therefore the disability in the present instance is much more that of the public than mine. As a Satyagrahi I may not regard as disabilities the restrictions which the Government have imposed upon me. As the Government are aware, I have denied myself even the pleasure of writing to my relatives as I am not allowed to perform the service of writing to my co-workers who are in a sense more to me than my relatives.

The advance copy of the contemplated communique with which you have considerably favoured me requires emendation in more places than one. For, as it stands, it does not fit in with facts.

As to the disavowal referred to in the proposed communique, the Government are aware that I regard the non-violent mass movement, for the launching of which the Congress gave me authority on the 8th. of August last, as perfectly legitimate and in the interest both of the Government and the public. As it is, the Government left me no time to start the movement. Therefore, how could a movement, which was never started, embarrass "India's" war effort? If then, there was any embarrassment by reason of the popular resentment of the Government's action in resorting to the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen, the responsibility was solely that of the Government. The mass movement, as the resolution sanctioning it said in so many words, was sanctioned in order to promote India-wide effort on behalf of the Allied cause, including the causes of Russia and China, whose danger was very great in August last and from which in my opinion, they are by no means free even now. I hope the Government will not feel offended when I say that all the war effort that is being put forth in India is not India's but the alien Government's. I submit that if the Government had complied with the request of the Congress as embodied in its August Resolution, there would have been a mass effort without parallel for winning the battle for human freedom and ridding the world of the menace that Fascism, Nazism, Japanism and Imperialism are. I may be wholly wrong, anyway, this is my deliberate and honest opinion.

In order to make the communique accord with facts, I suggest the following alteration in the first paragraph: After "Mr. Jinnah" and "in response to his public invitation to Mr. Gandhi to write to him, stating that he (Mr. Gandhi) would be willing to correspond with or meet him according as he wished."

I hope that the remaining portion of the communique too will be suitably amended in the light of my submission.

I am yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi.

May 28th, 1943.

Dear Sir Richard Tottenham,

I handed my reply to your letter of the 24th, insted, at about one o'clock yesterday, to the Superintendent. I hurried the writing and the despatch in the hope of my letter reaching you before the publication of the communique. I was therefore astonished and grieved to find the communique in the papers received in the afternoon, and *Reuter's* report of the reactions upon it in London. Evidently, there was no meaning in an advance copy of the communique being sent to me. I regard the communique not only to be inconsistent with facts, but unfair to me. The only way partial redress can be given to me is the publication of the correspondence between us. I therefore request that it may be published.

I am, yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi.

Official Reply

Home Department, June 4th. 1943.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am directed to acknowledge your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham, dated 27th. May 1943, and to say that the Government of India have considered it but see no reason to modify their communique already published.

Your Sincerely,
E. Conran-Smith, Secretary to the Government of India.

June 8th. 1943.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

In reply to your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham, dated 28th. May 1943, I am directed to say that the advance copy of the communique stating Government's reason for not forwarding your letter to Mr. Jinnah was furnished to you for your personal information and that Government regret they see no reason to publish the correspondence.

Your Sincerely,
E. Conran-Smith.

Gandhi—Maxwell Correspondence

Maxwell's Refusal to Correct Errors

On May 21, 1943 Mahatma Gandhi wrote to Sir Reginald Maxwell, then Home Member to the Government of India, pointing out "some errors" of fact and misquotations in the latter's speech in the Assembly in justification of the August arrests of Congress leaders. The following are extracts from the letter, paras 5 to 8 10, 11 and 15 being omitted because they deal with points already covered by Gandhiji in his reply to the Tottenham pamphlet :—

Dear Sir Reginald Maxwell,

It was only on the 10th instant, that I read your speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February last on the adjournment motion about my fast. I saw at once that it demanded a reply. I wish I had read it earlier.

I observe that you are angry, or at least were at the time you delivered your speech. I cannot in any other way account for your palpable inaccuracies. This letter is an endeavour to show them.....It is written to you, not as an official, but as man to man.

The first thought that came to me was that your speech was a deliberate distortion of facts. But I quickly revised it.....So long as there was a favourable construction possible to put upon your language, the unfavourable had to be rejected. I must assume therefore that what appeared to me to be distortions were not deliberate.

You have said that "the correspondence that led to the fast is there for anyone to interpret as he chooses", yet you have straightaway told your audience that "it can perhaps be read in the light of the following facts." Did you leave them the choice?

I now take your "facts" seriatim :—

1—"When the Congress Party passed their resolution of August 8th, a Japanese attack on this country was thought to be likely."

You seem to have conveyed the meaning that the thought was that of the Congress and that it was gratuitous. The fact is that the Government gave currency to the thought and emphasised it by action which even seemed ludicrous.

2—"By demanding the withdrawal of British power from India and by placing the Congress in open opposition to it the Congress Party might be thought to have hoped for some advantage to themselves if the Japanese attack succeeded."

Now this is not a fact but your opinion, wholly contrary to facts. Congressmen never hoped for, nor desired any advantage from, Japanese success; on the contrary, they dreaded it and that dread inspired the desire for the immediate end of British rule. All this is crystal clear from the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee (8th August, 1942) and my writings.

"HOPE" FROM JAPANESE

3—"To-day, six months after the Japanese danger has, at any rate, for the time being receded and there is little immediate hope from that quarter....."

This again is your opinion: mine is that the Japanese danger has not receded.....It still stares India in the face. Your fling that "there is little immediate hope from that quarter," should be withdrawn unless you think and prove that the resolution and my writings adverted to in the previous paragraph did not mean what they said.

4. "The movement initiated by the Congress has been decisively defeated."

I must combat this statement. Satyagraha knows no defeat. It flourishes on blows the hardest imaginable. But I need not go to that bower for comfort. I learnt in schools established by the British Government of India that "Freedom's battle once begun is bequeathed from bleeding sire to son." It is of little moment when the goal is reached so long as effort is not relaxed.

The dawn came with the establishment of the Congress sixty years ago. Sixth of April, 1919, on which All-India Satyagraha began, saw a spontaneous awakening from one end of India to the other.

You can certainly derive comfort, if you like, from the fact that the immediate objective of the movement was not gained as some Congressmen had expected. But that is no criterion of 'decisive' or any 'defeat.' It ill-becomes one belonging to a race which owns no defeat to deduce defeat of a popular movement from the

suppression of popular exuberance, may be not always wise, by a frightful exhibition of power.

FAST NOT TO SECURE RELEASE

9. "But now, fresh light emerges. Government without granting any of his demands informed Mr. Gandhi that they would release him for the purpose and for the duration of the fast in order to make it clear they disclaimed responsibility for the consequences. On that, Mr. Gandhi replied that if he was released, he would at once abandon the fast, and that he had conceived the fast only as a prisoner. Thus, if he were released, the objects for which he declared his fast, although still unfulfilled, would recede into the background. As a free man, he would neither demand these objects nor fast. Interpreted in this way, his fast would seem to amount to little more than a demand for release."

Together with the letter containing the offer of release, a copy of the draft communique that was to be issued by the Government was delivered to me. It did not say that the offer was made in order to make it clear that the Government "disclaimed responsibility for the consequences." If I had seen that offending sentence he would have sent a simple refusal. In my innocence, I put a fair meaning on the offer and in my reply I argued why I could not accept it. And, according to my wont, in order that the Government may not be misled in any shape or form, I told them how the fast was conceived and why it could not be taken by me as a free man. I went out of my way even to postpone, for the convenience of the Government, the commencement of the fast by a day. Mr. Irwin who had brought the offer and the draft communique appreciated the courtesy. Why was this reply of mine withheld from the public at the time the revised communique was issued, and why was unwarranted interpretation given instead? Was not my letter a material document.

Now for the second wrong. You say that if I were released my objects for which I had declared the fast would recede into the background, and even gratuitously suggest that as a free man I would neither demand these objects nor fast. As a free man I could and would have carried on an agitation for an impartial public inquiry into the charges brought against Congressmen and me. I would also have asked for permission to see the imprisoned Congressmen. Assume that my agitation had failed to make any impression on the Government, I might then have fasted. All this, if you were not labouring under intense irritation, you could have plainly seen from my letter, supported as you would have been by my past record. Instead, you have deduced a meaning, which according to the simple rules of construction, you had no right to deduce.....

Again as a free man I would have had the opportunity of examining the tales of destruction said to have been wrought by Congressmen and even by non-Congressmen. And if I had found that they had committed wanton acts of murder, then also I might have fasted as I have done before now.

You should thus see that the demands made in my letter to H. E. the Viceroy would not have receded into the background if I had been released, for they could have been pressed otherwise than by the fast, and that the fast had not the remotest connection with any desire for release.

Moreover imprisonment is never irksome to a Satyagrahi. For him a prison is a gateway of Liberty.

12. "I must confess that speaking for myself it is certainly repugnant to western ideas of decency to exploit against an opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy or to trifle with such a sacred trust as one's own life in order to play on the feelings of the public for the sake of some purely mundane object."

I must tread with extreme caution upon the ground with which you are infinitely more familiar than I can be. Let me however remind you of the historic fast of the late MacSwiney. I know that the British Government let him die in imprisonment. But he has been acclaimed by the Irish people as a hero and a martyr.

"BEGGED GOVT. NOT TO BE A DAMNED FOOL"

Edward Thompson in his "You have lived through all this" says that the late Mr. Asquith called the British Government's action a "political blunder of the first magnitude." The author adds: "He was allowed to die by inches while the world watched with a passion of admiration and sympathy and innumerable British men and women begged their Government not to be such a damned fool."

And is it repugnant to western ideas of decency to exploit (if that expression

must be retained.) against the opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy?

Which is better, to take the opponent's life secretly or openly, or to credit him with finer feelings and evoke them by fasting and the like?

Again, which is better, to trifle with one's own life by fasting or some other way of self-immolation, or to trifle with it by engaging in an attempt to compass the destruction of the opponent and his dependants?

13. "What he says in effect is this. 'You say, Government is right and the Congress is wrong. I say the Congress is right and the Government is wrong. I choose to put the burden of proof on you. I am the only person to be convinced. You must either admit you are wrong or submit your reasons to me and make me the sole arbiter in the matter.....' It seems to me that Mr. Gandhi's demands is rather like asking the United Nations to appoint Hitler to adjudge the responsibility for the present war. It is not usual in this country to put the accused person on the bench to judge his own case."

This is an unbecoming caricature of my letters to the Viceroy. What I said in effect was this: "You have allowed me to consider myself as your friend. I do not want to stand on my rights and demand a trial. You accuse me of being in the wrong. I contend that your Government is in the wrong. Since you would not admit your Government's error you owe it to me to let me know wherein I have erred. For, I am in the dark as to how I have erred. If you convince me of my guilt, I will make ample amends."

WOLF AND THE LAMB

My simple request you have turned against me and compared me to an imaginary Hitler appointed to adjudge his own case. If you do not accept my interpretation of my own letters, can I not say, let an impartial judge examine the rival interpretation? Will it be an offensive comparison if I recall the fable of the wolf who was always in the right and the lamb who was always in the wrong?

14. "Mr. Gandhi is the leader of an open rebellion.....He forfeits that right (the right of being heard) so long as he remains an open rebel. He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method. He cannot take part in the public life under the protection of the law that he denies. He cannot be a citizen and yet not a subject."

You are right in describing me as the leader of an open rebellion except for a fundamental omission namely, strictly non-violent. This omission is on a par with the omission of 'nots' from the commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc.

You may dismiss the phrase or explain it away in any manner you like. But when you quote a person you may not omit anything from his language especially an omission which changes the whole aspect of things.

I have declared myself an open rebel on many occasions, even during my visit to London on the occasion of the second Round Table Conference. But the anathema that you have pronounced against me has not been pronounced before.....

You will perhaps recall the time when the late Lord Reading was willing to hold a Round Table Conference in which I was to be present, although I was leading a mass civil disobedience movement. I was not called because I had insisted that the Ali Brothers, who were then in prison, should be released.

British history which I was taught as a lad had it that Wat Tyler and John Hampden who had rebelled were heroes. In very recent times the British Government treated with Irish rebels whilst their hands were still red with blood. Why should I become an outcast although my rebellion is innocent and I have had nothing to do with violence?

In spite of the validity of my claim that you have enunciated a novel doctrine, I admit that you made a perfect statement when you said: "He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method." My method being based on truth and non-violence ever succeeds to the extent it is applied. Therefore, I function always and only through the success of my method and to the extent that I correctly represent, in my own person, its fundamentals.

The moment I became a Satyagrahi from that moment I ceased to be a subject, but never ceased to be a citizen. A citizen obeys laws voluntarily and never under compulsion or for fear of the punishment prescribed for their breach. He breaks them when he considers it necessary and welcomes the punishment. That robs it of its edge or of the disgrace which it is supposed to imply.

"ARMED" WITH A RESOLUTION

16. "It is not the method of peaceful persuasion to go to the person whom you wish to convince armed with a Resolution declaring mass rebellion. The essence of negotiation is that both parties should be uncommitted and that neither should exert the pressure of force on the other. That is true in any circumstances. But as between a subject and the State which rules him the position is still more emphatic. It is not for the subject to deal with the State on equal terms, still less to approach it with an open threat."

At the outset let me make one correction. The resolution did not 'declare' mass rebellion. It merely sanctioned the "starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. I was to guide the nation in the steps to be taken." The paragraph sanctioning the mass struggle also "appeals to Britain and the United Nations in the interest of world freedom."

The essence of negotiation should undoubtedly be that the parties are uncommitted and that neither "exerts the pressure of force on the other." In the case under consideration the actual position is that one party has overwhelming force at its disposal and the other has none. About non-committal too the Congress has no commitments except the immediate attainment of freedom. Subject to that there is the widest latitude for negotiation.

Your proposition about the subject and the state is, I knew, a reply to the cry of 'Quit India.' Only the cry is intrinsically just and the subject and the state formula is too antediluvian to have any real meaning. It is because the Congress has felt the subjection of India as an unsufferable reproach that it has risen against it. A well ordered state is subject to the people. It does not descend upon the people from above but the people make and unmake it.

The resolution of 8th August did not contain any threat, open or veiled. It prescribed the limitations under which the negotiations could be carried on and its sanction was free of all 'force' i. e., violence. It consisted of self-suffering. Instead of appreciating the fact that the Congress laid all its cards on the table, you have given a sinister meaning to the whole movement by drawing unwarranted inferences.

In so far as there was any violence after the 8th August last on the part of any Congressman, it was wholly unauthorised as is quite clear from the resolution itself. The Government in their wisdom left me no time whatsoever for issuing instructions. The All India Congress Committee finished after midnight on the 8th. August. Well before sunrise on the 9th. I was carried away by the Police Commissioner without being told what crime I had committed. And so were the members of the Working Committee and the principal Congressmen who happened to be in Bombay. Is it too much when I say that the Government invited violence and did not want the movement to proceed on peaceful lines?

NEGOTIATION WITH REBELS

Now let me remind you of an occasion of an open rebellion when you played an important part. I refer to the famous Bardoli Satyagraha, under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He was conducting a campaign of Civil Disobedience. It had evidently reached a stage when the then Governor of Bombay felt that there should be a peaceful end to the struggle. You will remember that the result of an interview between H. E. the then Governor and the Sardar was the appointment of a committee of which you were a distinguished member. And the committee's findings were for the most part in favour of the civil resisters. Of course you may say, if you wish, that the Governor made a mistake in negotiating with the rebel, and so did you in accepting the appointment. Consider the reverse position, what would have happened, if instead of appointing a committee the Governor had attempted heavy repression? Would not the Government have been held responsible for any outbreak of violence if the people had lost self-control?

17. "Government does hold Mr. Gandhi responsible for the recent happenings that have so disturbed the peace of India, caused so much loss of life and property of innocent persons and brought the country to the brink of a terrible danger. I do not say he had any personal complicity in acts of violence..but it was he that put the match to the train carefully laid beforehand by himself and his colleagues. That he was forced to do so prematurely was not his fault but our fortune. This was the method by which they hoped to gain their ends. They may seek to repudiate it now that it has proved unsuccessful, but the responsibility is theirs nonetheless.

...If Mr. Gandhi wished to dissociate himself from them, he could have spoken for himself without consulting the members of the Working Committee. Can he then without cancelling the Congress rebellion, without reparation, without even assurances, for the future claim, at any moment to step back as though nothing, had happened into the public life of the country and be received by Government and society as a good citizen?"

I can accept no responsibility for the unfortunate happenings described by you. I have no doubt whatsoever that history will record that the responsibility for the happenings was wholly that of things. I could not put a match to a train which for one thing was never laid. And if the train was never laid, the question of prematurity does not arise.

MISFORTUNE OF FIRST MAGNITUDE

The deprivation of the people of their leaders you may consider "our fortune." I consider it a misfortune of the first magnitude for all concerned.

I wish to repudiate nothing of what I have done or intended. I have no sense of repentance for I have no sense of having done any wrong to any person.

I have stated times without number that I detest violence in any shape or form. But I can give no opinion about things of which I have no first hand knowledge.

I never asked for permission to consult the Congress Working Committee to enable me to dissociate myself from violence. I asked for permission to see them, if I was expected to make any proposals on behalf of the Committee.

I cannot cancel the Congress rebellion which is of a purely non-violent character. I am proud of it.

I have no reparation to make, for I have no consciousness of guilt. And there can be no question of assurances for the future, when I hold myself guiltless.

NOT FACTS BUT OPINIONS

The question of re-entering the public life of the country or being received by Government and society as a good citizen does not arise. I am quite content to remain a prisoner. I have never thrust myself on the public life of the country or on the Government, I am but a humble servant of India. The only certificate I need is a certificate from the inner voice. I hope you realise that you gave your audience not facts but your opinions framed in anger.

To conclude, why have I written this letter? Not to answer your anger with anger. I have written it in the hope that you may read the sincerity behind my own words.

I never despair of converting any person even an official of the hardest type. General Smuts was converted or say reconciled as he declared in his speech introducing the bill giving relief in terms of the settlement arrived at between him and me in 1914. That he has not fulfilled my hope or that of the Indian settlers which the settlement had inspired is a sad story, but it is irrelevant to the present purpose.

I can multiply such recollections. I claim no credit for these conversions or reconciliations. They were wholly due to the working of truth and non-violence expressing themselves through me.

I subscribe to the belief or the philosophy that all life in its essence is one, and that the humans are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realisation of that identity. This belief requires a living faith in a living God who is the ultimate arbiter of our fate. Without Him not a blade of grass moves.

My belief requires me not to despair even of my converting you, though your speech warrants no such hope. If God has willed it, He may put power in some word of mine which will touch your heart. Mine is but to make the effort. The result is in God's hand.

(Sd.) M. K. Gandhi.

Sir R. Maxwell's reply to Gandhiji was as follows :—

Personal,
New Delhi, the 17th June, 1943.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have your letter of the 21st May and have read with interest your comments on my Assembly speech of the 15th February. I see you still maintain the position which you took up in your letters to his Excellency the Viceroy regarding the Congress resolution of the 8th August and responsibility for the disturbances

that followed it. As you know Government have never accepted the construction which you sought to put upon those events. So long as this fundamental difference exists, I must regretfully conclude that there is not sufficient common ground for profitable discussion of the other points raised in your letter.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) R. MAXWELL.

To the above, Mahatma Gandhi replied on June 23, as follows:—

Dear Sir Reginald Maxwell,

I thank you for your reply of 17th instant received on 21st instant to my letter of 21st May last.

I had not hoped that my reply would remove the fundamental difference between us, but I had hoped, and would still like to hope that the difference would be no bar to an admission and correction of discovered errors.

I had thought, and still think, that my letter did point out some errors in your Assembly speech of 15th February last.

I am
Yours sincerely
(Sd.) M. K. GANDHI.

Gandhi—Samuel Correspondence

Gandhi's Letter to Lord Samuel

During his detention in the Aga Khan's Palace, Mahatma Gandhi wrote a number of letters, as occasion arose, explaining the position of himself and the Congress in general and the implications of the August Resolution in particular. In these letters, which have now been released for publication, Gandhiji was mainly concerned to correct and disprove the many mis-statements about, and allegations against himself, his colleagues of the Working Committee and the Congress, by interested spokesmen in this country and in England.

For instance, Gandhiji wrote a letter on May 15, 1943, to Lord Samuel, in reply to his speech to the Lords on April 6, 1943. The letter, which was not forwarded by the authorities to the addressee, runs as follows:

Dear Lord Samuel,

I enclose herewith a cutting from THE HINDU dated the 8th April last, containing *Reuter's* summary of your speech in the House of Lords, during the recent debate. Assuming the correctness of the summary, I feel impelled to write this letter.

The report distressed me. I was wholly unprepared for your unqualified association with the one-sided and unjustified statement of the Government of India against the Congress and me.

You are a philosopher and a Liberal. A philosophic mind has always meant for me a detached mind, and liberalism a sympathetic understanding of men and things.

As it seems to me, there is nothing in what the Government has said to warrant the conclusions to which you are reported to have come.

From the summary, I selected a few of the items which, in my opinion, are inconsistent with facts.

1 "The Congress Party has to a great extent thrown over democratic philosophy."

The Congress Party has never "thrown over democratic philosophy." Its career has been one progressive march towards democracy. Every one who subscribes to the attainment of the goal of Independence through peaceful and legitimate means and pays four annas per year can become its member.

2. "It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism."

You have based your charge on the fact that the Working Committee of the Congress had control over the late Congress Ministries. Does not the successful party in the House of Commons do likewise ? I am afraid even when democracy has come to full maturity, the parties will be running elections and their managing committees will be controlling the actions and policies of their members. Individual Congressmen did not run elections independently of the party machinery. Candidates were officially chosen and they were helped by All-India Leaders.

"Totalitarian", according to the Oxford Pocket Dictionary, means "designating a party that permits no rival loyalties or parties." "Totalitarian State" means "with only one governing party." It must have violence for its sanction for keeping control. A Congress member, on the contrary, enjoys the same freedom as the Congress President, or any other member of the Working Committee. There are parties within the Congress itself. Above all the Congress eschews violence. Members render voluntary obedience. The All-India Congress Committee can at any moment unseat the members of the Working Committee and elect others.

3. "They (Congress ministers) resigned (not?) because they had not the support of their Assemblies. They resigned because while *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the Higher Command. That is not democracy. That is totalitarianism."

You would not have said this, if you had known the full facts. The *de jure* responsibility of the Ministers to the electorate was not diminished in any way by their *de facto* responsibility to the Congress Working Committee for the very simple and valid reason that the Working Committee derives its power and prestige from the very electorate to whom the Ministers were responsible. The prestige that the Congress enjoys is due solely to its service to the people. As a matter of fact the Ministers conferred with the members of their parties in their respective assemblies and they tendered their resignations with their approval.

MOST DEMOCRATIC BODY

But totalitarianism is fully represented by the Government of India which is responsible to no one in India. It is a tragic irony that a Government which is steeped in totalitarianism brings that very charge against the most democratic body in India.

4. "India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have.....it is division according to religious communities."

Political parties in India are not divided according to religious communities. From its very commencement the Congress has deliberately remained a purely political organisation. It has had Britishers and Indians, including Christians, Parsis, Muslims and Hindus as Presidents. The Liberal Party of India is another political organisation not to mention others that are wholly non-sectarian.

That there are also communal organisations based on religion and they take part in politics, is undoubtedly true. But that fact cannot sustain the categorical statement made by you. I do not wish in any way to minimise the importance of these organisations or the considerable part they play in the politics of the country. But I do assert that they do not represent the political mind of India. It can be shown that historically the politico-religious organisations are the result of the deliberate application by the Government of the 'divide and rule policy.' When the British Imperial influence is totally withdrawn, India will probably be represented solely by political parties drawn from all classes and creeds.

5. "The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the populations of India. Yet in their totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole."

If you measure the representative character of the Congress by the numbers of the official roll, then it does not represent even half the population. The official membership is infinitesimal compared to India's vast population of nearly four hundred millions. The enrolled membership began only in 1920. Before that the Congress was represented by its All-India Congress Committee whose members were mainly elected by various political associations.

Nevertheless the Congress has so far as I know, always claimed to speak the mind of India, not even excluding the Princes. A country under alien subjection can only have one political goal, namely its freedom from that subjection. And considering that the Congress has always and predominantly exhibited that spirit of freedom, its claim to represent the whole of India can hardly be denied. That some parties repudiate the Congress, does not derogate from the claim in the sense in which it has been advanced.

6. "When Mr. Gandhi called upon the British Government to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery."

I never said that when the British quitted India, "the Congress would take delivery." This is what I said in my letter to H. E. the Viceroy dated 29th. February last.

"The Government have evidently ignored or over-looked the very material fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All

its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah to form a National Government subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such Government being responsible to a duly elected Assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except Shrimati Sarojini Devi I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind."

7. "If this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa or the United States had abstained from action as the Congress in India abstainedthen perhaps the cause of freedom everywhere would have gone under.....It is a pity that the leaders of the Congress do not realise that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind."

How can you compare India with Canada and other Dominions which are virtually independent entities, let alone Great Britain or the United States wholly independent countries? Has India a spark of the freedom of the type enjoyed by the countries named by you?

FREEDOM NOW

India has yet to attain her freedom. Supposing the Allied powers were to lose, and supposing further that the Allied forces were to withdraw from India under military necessity, which I do not expect, the countries you name may lose their independence. But unhappy India will be obliged to change masters, if she is even then in her defenceless state.

Neither Congress, nor any other organisation, can possibly kindle mass enthusiasm for the Allied cause without the present possession of Independence, to use your own expression either *de jure* or *de facto*. Mere promise of future independence cannot work that miracle.

The cry of "Quit India" has arisen from a realisation of the fact that if India is to shoulder the burden of representing, or fighting for a cause of mankind, she must have the glow of freedom now. Has a freezing man ever been warmed by the promise of the warmth of sunshine coming at some future date?

The great pity is that the ruling power distrusts everything that the Congress does or says under my influence which it has suddenly discovered is wholly evil. It is necessary for a clear understanding that you should know my connection with the Congress and Congressmen. It was in 1930 that I was successful in my attempt to sever all formal connection with the Congress.

There was no coolness between the Congress Working Committee members and myself. But I realised that I was cramped and so were the members, whilst I was officially connected with the Congress. The growing restraints which my conception of non-violence required from time to time, were proving too hard to bear. I felt, therefore, that my influence should be strictly moral.

I had no political ambition. My politics were subservient to the demands of truth and non-violence, as I had defined and practised for practically the whole of my life. And so I was permitted by the fellow members to sever the official connection even to the extent of giving up the four anna membership. It was understood between us that I should attend the meetings of the Working Committee only when the members required my presence for consultation in matters involving the application of non-violence or affecting communal unity.

Since that time, I have been wholly unconnected with the routine work of the Congress. Many meetings of the Working Committee have, therefore, taken place without me. Their proceedings I have seen only when they have been published in the newspapers. The members of the Working Committee are independent-minded men. They engage me often in prolonged discussions before they accept my advice on the interpretation of non-violence as applied to problems arising from new situations.

It will be therefore unjust to them and to me to say that I exercise any influence over them beyond what reason commands. The public know how, even until quite recently, the majority of the members of the Working Committee have on several occasions rejected my advice.

8. "They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance. In the name of non-violence they have led a movement which was characterised in many places by the utmost violence and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian Congress leaders in the disorders."

This charge shows to what extent the British public has been misled by imaginary stories, as in the Government of India publication statements have been torn from their context and put together as if they were made at one time or in the same context.

The Congress is committed to non-violence so far as the attainment of freedom is concerned. And to that end the Congress has been struggling all these twenty years however imperfectly it may be, to express non-violence in action, and I think it had succeeded to a great extent. But it has never made any pretence of war resistance through non-violence. Could it have made that claim and lived up to it, the face of India would have been changed and the world would have witnessed the miracle of organised violence being successfully met by organised non-violence.

"INFLAMMATORY ACTION OF GOVERNMENT"

But human nature has nowhere risen to the full height which full non-violence demands. The disturbances that took place after the 8th. August were not due to any action on the part of the Congress. They were due entirely to the inflammatory action of the Government in arresting Congress leaders throughout India and that at a time which was psychologically wholly wrong. The utmost that can be said is that Congressmen or others had not risen high enough in non-violence to be proof against all provocation.

It surprises me that although you have admitted that "this White Paper may be good journalism but it is not so good as a State document," you have based your sweeping judgment on the strength of that paper. If you would read the very speeches to which the paper makes reference, you will find there ample material to show that the Government of India had not the slightest justification in making those unfortunate arrests on August 9th, last and after, or in making the charges they have brought against the arrested leaders after their incarceration—charges which have never been sifted in any court of law.

9. "Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about the fast was his ending it."

You have used a strong word to characterise my fast. H. E. the Viceroy has also allowed himself to use the same word. You have perhaps the excuse of ignorance. He had my letters before him.

All I can tell you is that fasting is an integral part of Satyagraha. It is a satyagrahi's ultimate weapon. Why should it be blackmail when a man, under a sense of wrong, crucifies his flesh?

You may not know that Satyagrahi prisoners fasted in South Africa for the removal of their wrongs; so they have done in India. One fast of mine you know, as I think you were then a Cabinet Minister. I refer to the fast which resulted in the alteration of the decision of His Majesty's Government. If the decision had stood, it would have perpetuated the curse of Untouchability. The alteration prevented the disaster.

THE FAST—AND A FALSE ACCUSATION

The Government of India communicate announcing my recent fast, issued after it had commenced, accused me of having undertaken the fast to secure my release. It was a wholly false accusation. It was based on a distortion of the letter I had written in answer to that of the Government. That letter dated the 8th. February was suppressed at the time when the communicate was issued.

If you will study the question I refer you to the following which were published in the newspapers:

My letter to H. E. the Viceroy dated, New Year's Eve, 1942.

H. E.'s reply dated, January 13, 1943.

My letter dated, January 19, 1943.

H. E.'s reply dated, January 25, 1943.

My letter dated, January 25, 1943.

H. E.'s reply dated, February 5, 1943.

My letter dated, February 8, 1943

Sir R. Tottenham's letter dated February 7, 1943.

" reply dated February, 8, 1943.

And I do not know from where you got the impression that I ended the fast, for which supposed act you give me the credit. If you mean by it that I ended

the fast before its time, I would call such an ending a discredit to me. As it was, the fast ended on its due date for which I can claim no credit.

10. "He (Lord Samuel) considered that the negotiations broke down on points on which they would not have broken down had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement."

The statement made by the President of the Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Nehru, who carried on the prolonged negotiations, I venture to think make it quite clear that no true man could have shown more real or greater desire for a settlement. In this connection, it is well to remember that Pandit Nehru was, and I have no doubt still remains, an intimate friend of Sir Stafford Cripps at whose invitation he had come from Allahabad. He could therefore leave no stone unturned to bring the negotiations to a successful issue. The history of the failure has yet to be written: when it is it will be found that the cause lay elsewhere than with the Congress.

I hope my letter has not wearied you. Truth has been overlaid with much untruth. If not justice to a great organisation, the cause of Truth, which is humanity, demands an impartial investigation of the present distemper.

Yours Sincerely,
Sd. M. K. Gandhi,

"BAN ON ORDINARY RIGHT OF CONVICT"

The following letters passed between Gandhiji and the Government of India over the latter's refusal to forward the letter to Lord Samuel :

Home Department,
New Delhi, the 26th May, 1943.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am desired to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 15th enclosing a letter for the Right Hon'ble Lord Samuel. I am to say that for the reasons which have been explained to you in another connection, the Government of India have decided that your letter cannot be forwarded.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. R. Tottenham

Detention Cam, 1st June, 1943.

Dear Sir Richard Tottenham,

I have your note of the 28th ultimo conveying the Government's decision about my letter to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. I would just like to say that the letter is not political correspondence but it is a complaint to a member of the House of Lords pointing out misrepresentations into which he has been betrayed and which do mean injustice. The Government's decision amounts to a ban on the ordinary right belonging even to a convict of correcting damaging misrepresentations made about him. Moreover, I suggest that the decision about my letter to Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah is wholly inapplicable to this letter to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. Therefore, I request reconsideration of the decision.

I am,
Your sincerely,
Sd. M. K. Gandhi.

Home Department,
New Delhi, 7th June, 1943.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am directed to acknowledge your letter to Sir Richard Tottenham dated 1st June 1943, on the subject of Government's decision regarding your letter to Lord Samuel and to say that Government regret that they do not see their way to alter that decision.

Yours sincerely,
Sd, Coran Smith.

The All India Hindu Mahasabha

Working Committee—Bombay—7th. & 8th. August 1943

TEXT OF RESOLUTIONS

Proceedings of the meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held on the 7th. and 8th. August 1943, at Dadar, Bombay.

The following members were present :

Dr. B. S. Moonje, Pt. Chandragupta Vedalankar, Pt. Nilkanth Das, Sjt. Anang Mohan Dam, Kuwar Guru Narain, Shreemati Janakibai Joshi, Dr. M. B. Udgaonkar, Sjt. A. S. Bhide, Pt. Anandpriyaji, Pt. Shivrath Sharma, Lt. D. L. Patwardhan, Sjt. Pyda Shrothi Garu, Sjt. V. B. Gogte, Sjt. S. R. Date, Sjt. Gulabchand Hirachand, Sjt. Ganapati, Sjt. M. N. Majumdar and Dr. P. V. Naidu.

SAVARKAR ELECTED PRESIDENT

Dr. B. S. Moonje, General Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, read a letter received from Veer Savarkar, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha regarding his resignation. A resolution was proposed by Dr. P. V. Naidu and seconded by Kuwar Guru Naryan. It was passed unanimously. The following is the full text of the resolution :

"In view of the resignation tendered by the President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, this meeting of the Working Committee resolves that pending the decision of the Working Committee on the question of resignation, which cannot be taken up in this meeting as it was not included in the Agenda of this meeting, to request Veer Savarkar to preside over this meeting and continue his presidentship until the question is decided by the Working Committee.

After this *Veer Savarkar* explained his position. "As all of my colleagues here are unanimously pressing me to continue to be the President till the question of the resignation was finally decided, I shall abide by your decree to preside over sittings of this Working Committee Meeting."

Veer Savarkar then took the Chair.

The proceedings of the last meetings of the Working Committee held on the 9th and 10th May, 1943, were read and confirmed.

Veer Savarkar explained the position with regard to the resolution passed by the Working Committee on 9th May 1943 to the effect that disciplinary action should be taken against Raja Maheshwar Dayal Seth. The President read out the following decision :

"That the resolution itself constitutes a sufficient warning in this case and consequently no further step is needed."

The following resolutions were then passed :

SYMPATHY WITH MRS. GADGIL

"This meeting of the Working Committee mourns the accidental death of Mr. G. V. Gadgil, the famous pilot of Poona, who had won a great distinction in the Viceroy Cup Race. His career stands as an inspiration to Hindu youths to join Air force by hundreds, undeterred by accidents and learn the art for the Nation's freedom. This meeting shares in the grief with his relatives and especially his wife who is also a pilot."

—Moved from the Chair.

VIKRAMA-JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

"In pursuance of the Resolution passed by the Hindu Mahasabha in the Cawnpore Session, this meeting of the Working Committee calls upon the Hindus of India to take steps immediately to organise a central—Pan Hindu Committee to celebrate the second millenium in commemoration of the illustrious Hindu hero Shri. Vikramaditya, the founder of the Vikram Era. This meeting further desires that H. H. the Maharaja of Gwalior should be approached by the above Utsava Committee to act as a patron on these Vikrama celebrations. This meeting calls upon all branches of the Hindu Mahasabha throughout the country to co-operate with this Committee."

—Moved by Pt. Chadragupta Vedalankar.—Seconded by Pt. Anandpriyaji, (Passed unanimously.)

JAIPUR AFFAIRS

"This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha regrets to note that ever since Sir Mirza Ismail has been appointed as the Prime Minister

of Jaipur State the administration has become anti-Hindu and pro-Muslim, as the following instances will illustrate :

(1) The solemn pledges which were given by Sir Mirza Ismail to the Mahasabha leaders regarding the status of Hindi in the State have not been fulfilled in the spirit in which they were expressed. We are sorry to note that the knowledge of Urdu has been made compulsory for all the servants of the State, although 96% population of the State is Hindu speaking.

(2) Attempts have been made to crush the Hindu Sabha movement in the State. *Jaipur Samachar*—a daily Hindu Sabha paper—has been banned under the D. I. R. in spite of the fact that the policy of the paper was neither against the war efforts, nor against the loyalty to the State. Its editor has been detained under D.I.R. Veer Singh Tawar—a Mahasabha worker has been ordered not to make speeches while Muslim preachers have been let loose. Veer Ramchandra Sharma who was one of the pioneers of Hindi movement in Jaipur has been externed from the State.

"This Sabha warns Sir Mirza Ismail to change his anti-Hindu policy and urges upon the Maharaja to remove Sir Mirza Ismail from the premiership of the Hindu State."

—Moved by Chandragupta Vadalkar. Seconded by Mr. Gulabchand Hirachand. (Passed unanimously).

The meeting was then adjourned till 10 A. M. the next day.

Resolutions—Second Day—8th. August 1943

On Sunday, August 8, Dr. S. P. Mookerji was present.

It was resolved that Sgt. Kripa Narain, Advocate, should be requested to draft the resolution in proper legal form after going through all the registration of the Hindu Mahasabha, and the resolution thus drafted be placed before the next meeting of the Working Committee.

The question of coalition ministries came up for discussion. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji initiated the discussion saying that the time had come for the Mahasabha to lay down certain principles in connection with the coalition ministries. He also said that he was not in favour of non-co-operation but in favour of responsive co-operation.

Then Dr. B. S. Moonje explained his views. He said : "I am generally in agreement with Dr. Mookerji. But there are certain points which want clarification." He also assured the House that there was no difference between Veer Savarkar and Dr. Mookerji on the question of coalition ministries. Dr. P. V. Naidu expressed his views citing the Madras example. Kunwar Guru Narain said : "We cannot make hard and fast rules at this stage. The best thing is that we should lay down certain general principles and should declare that we are in favour of coalition ministries and according to the Provincial circumstances we shall decide this question."

Other members also took part in the discussion and expressed their views on this question. Summing up the whole question Veer Savarkar explained that as far as coalition ministries were concerned, they all had agreed leaving the differences of details. Nobody wanted that Muslim League Ministries should be installed but if the Muslim League Ministry was inevitable, the Provincial Hindu Sabha must judge whether the Hindu interest would be better served by joining it and transforming it into coalition ministry or not.

Then Dr. Moonje asked some questions about the Sind Ministry and Veer Savarkar explained the whole situation to the complete satisfaction of the Committee. He made it clear that the Sind Hindu Ministers had signed the Hindu Mahasabha pledge, and were ready to abide by the decision of the Provincial Hindu Sabha.

At the meeting held at 3 P. M. the following resolutions were passed :

COALITION MINISTRIES

(1) The Working Committee is not against the formation of coalition ministries, although it recognises that such a ministry cannot be expected to carry into effect to the fullest extent the ideals and programme of the Hindu Mahasabha such as a Hindu Sabha Ministry by itself would be capable of doing.

(2) If the Hindu Mahasabha forms a coalition ministry, the legislature must have some members belonging to the Hindu Mahasabha to support the ministers, who on their part, should sign the membership of the Hindu Mahasabha and agree to a pledge to abide by the decision of the Hindu Mahasabha.

(3) Any coalition ministry formed with the support of the Hindu Mahasabha, must have a majority of members supporting it in the legislature.

(4) Where the Hindu Mahasabha forms a coalition ministry, it will adopt a programme in collaboration with the party or parties with whom it will work; such programme must in no way be prejudicial to Hindu interest.

The Hindu Mahasabha is not prepared to co-operate with the Muslim League and form a coalition ministry, until the Muslim League agrees that the Pakistan issue should be shelved during the period of the War and while such coalition lasts. If, however, in any Provincial Legislature the Muslim Ministers were to support a resolution in favour of Pakistan or to initiate a similar resolution on their own behalf, the Hindu Sabha Ministers will oppose such a resolution on the floor of the House and carry on all other activities in that connection. Should such a resolution be however carried through Moslem support, the Hindu Sabha ministers will resign, if the Provincial Hindu Sabhas concerned were so to decide.

(5) Subject to the foregoing principles being observed each Provincial Hindu Sabha will decide whether it will form a coalition ministry, and if so, will work out detailed lines of co-operation.

(6) All disputes and interpretations will be decided by the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha regarding the formation of Provincial Ministries.

—Moved by Dr. S. P. Mukerji,—Seconded by Dr. B. S. Moonje. (Passed unanimously).

MOSLEM IMMIGRATION IN ASSAM

"The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha views with concern the influx into the Province of Assam of Mohammedans from outside the Province under the pretext of "Grow More Food" campaign and requests the Government of Assam to help the Hindus from the Districts of Sylhet and Cachar to settle in the Assam Valley and contribute to the Food campaign and calls upon the Government to see that the Moslems who are rush-in now, do not get any more facilities than Hindu cultivators and to extend full protection to the Hindu settlers."

—Moved by : Sjt. Anang Mohan Dam—Second by : Sjt. A. S. Bhide. (Passed unanimously).

SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE

"The Hindu Mahasabha has received reports from various places and especially from Bihar and eastern parts of the country that cows and bullocks and other cattle are being slaughtered and exported in very large numbers for the use of the Army. It has resulted in reducing the number of cattle necessary for agriculture and has also caused scarcity of milk.

—Moved by Pt. Shivnath Sharma. —Seconded by Pt. Nilkanth Das. (Passed unanimously).

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION

"This meeting of the Working Committee of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha records its deep sense of sorrow at the loss the country has sustained by the sudden and unexpected demise of Mr. B. C. Chatterji, an ex-Vice-President of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha, who during his life-time has rendered immense service to the country and to his community, and also records its deep sense of sorrow at the loss to the country of Mr. Gopalrao Chitale of Poona who was the Secretary of the Poona Hindu Sabha.

(Moved from the Chair).

MUSLIM RIGHTS IN HINDU STATES

"This meeting of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha calls upon the Hindu Princes not to tolerate any agitation started by the Muslims for reservation and weightages in services and public bodies over and above their population ratio, at the cost of the loyal Hindu subjects."

—Moved by Pt. Chandragupta Vedalankar. —Seconded by Mr. M. N. Mitra. (Passed unanimously).

FOOD SITUATION

"The Working Committee notes with concern and alarm the steady deterioration in the food situation throughout the country. It records its opinion that this is due mainly to the thoughtless emphasis laid by Government on military requirements in India and its failure in properly co-ordinating its plans and activities so as to protect the legitimate interests of the Indian people at large. The Working Committee has specially received alarming reports regarding the food situation in Bengal, Orissa, Malabar, Bijapur and other places. Reports of death, suicide and sale of children, of starvation and misery due to shortage of food-stuff reveal a situation in Bengal unprecedented in the history of the British India. The Working Committee emphasises that supply of food-grains to Bengal and other deficit

provinces must immediately be regarded as a vital war measure and any delay in doing so may lead to most serious consequences affecting internal peace and security. The Working Committee notes that the Bengal Ministry, actuated as it is by communal partisanship, has failed to ease the situation effectively. It urges upon the Government of India to arrange for immediate supply of wheat from Australia to India and to announce its scheme for equitable distribution of available food grains within India so as to save those areas which are in urgent need of assistance and to stop export from deficit provinces and from India as a whole. The Working Committee has read with astonishment the remarks seriously made by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons that there was no real shortage of food-grains in India and the people were suffering either for private hoarding or because of overeating by a section of the population. It is the elementary responsibility of any civilised Government to feed its people and the problem in India is so vast and complex that no private efforts, however laudable and desirable, can really tackle the grave situation that threatens some parts of India to-day."

—Moved by : Dr. P. V. Naidu. —Seconded by : Mr. M. N. Majumdar.
(Passed unanimously).

The meeting came to an end with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Mahasabha Silver Jubilee Celebrations

Amritsar—25th. December 1943

Cossimbazar Maharaja's address

"The entire nationalist movement in India in which the Hindus have always been in the vanguard never discriminated between races and religions, but sent a clarion call to all and sundry to join in the common movement," observed *Maharaja Srish Chandra Nandy* of Cossimbazar, inaugurating the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha which commenced at Amritsar on the 25th. December 1943.

"This movement," the Maharaja added, "was not anti-British, and if properly handled, this should be one of the most constructive agents in making democracy a successful experiment in India."

Continuing, the speaker said : "But thanks to the introduction of communal electorates and other anti-democratic devices, affairs in India have taken a different shape, giving rise to political organisation based on racial or religious groupings. So long as, therefore, these communal systems stand, I do not see how Mr. Amery can escape from the proposition that he will have to negotiate with the Hindu Mahasabha, representing as it does the majority community in India. Mr. Amery as the representative of British democracy is responsible for bringing about the alignment of political groups in India on communal lines and in that sense the Hindu Mahasabha is his own creation. This is, therefore, the only legitimate body to whom Mr. Amery can transfer his 'burden.' As regards the protection of minority interests, this is evidently a domestic question for the future Indian democracy to solve, and the Hindus know fully well how to rise equal to the occasion and deal generously with the minority interests. The final say in this matter of shaping the future destiny of India rests ultimately with the British".

THE BANE OF COMMUNAL ELECTORATES

Criticising the communal character of the measures of the British Government adopted for the constitutional and other development of India, the Maharaja remarked that, in spite of the best traditions of British statesmanship at home and their successful experiment with Parliamentary democracy in Britain herself, the British politician did not hesitate to introduce communal electorates in India by which the development of a common citizenship was hampered from the very beginning. The seeds sown in those fateful years had developed into a mighty anti-democratic force by now ; and Muslim intransigence had moved so far as to demand a vivisection of India into so-called Muslim zones and non-Muslim zones. The attitude of the British politicians was really interesting, as they had adopted something like a wait-and-see policy regarding this demand, and perhaps as a feeler, the germs of Pakistan had been injected in the Stafford Cripps' proposals.

A consciousness of Hindu strength was suggested by the speaker to be the only basis on which an abiding Hindu-Muslim unity could be achieved. Facts, he thought, were mere patch-works, as these, without the necessary mental background simply helped to aggravate the programme. It was his firm conviction that the hope of an eventual Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of the recognition of mutual strength was sure to materialise in the near future if the Mahasabha built up its strength with the new orientation and new life imparted to it by Mr. Savarkar.

Licence for Procession cancelled

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee who arrived at Amritsar in the afternoon of the 25th. December to preside over the Silver Jubilee session of Hindu Mahasabha, was accorded a tumultuous reception at the railway station. Dr. Mookerjee was profusely garlanded. He drove to the "pandal" amidst cheering crowds.

Among those present at the station were Raju Mahashekar Dayal Seth, Dr. Moonje, Dr. Wadhvani and Rai Sahib Gokuldas, two Hindu Ministers of Sind. There was a large crowd of people who had come from different parts of the province.

Before the procession started the Superintendent of Police visited the "pandal" and informed the members of the Reception Committee that under orders issued by the Punjab Government in regard to the restrictions of the wearing of "khaki" uniform the volunteers of the Mahavir Dal could not be allowed to join the procession in their "khaki" uniforms. At 6 p.m. the members of the Reception Committee conferred with Dr. Mookerjee whether the procession should be abandoned or the Government order be defied.

After two hours' consultation among themselves, the Mahasabha leaders decided to take out the procession. Dr. Mookerjee was seated on a richly caparisoned elephant lent by the Kapurthala State. Beside him sat Sir Gokul Chand Narang, Chairman of the Reception Committee. The procession had hardly proceeded a furlong when a local magistrate announced that the District Magistrate had cancelled the licence of the procession and ordered the processionists to disperse.

Afterwards, Dr. Mookerjee in a speech at Tilaknagar criticised the action of the local authorities and said that the situation arising out of the incident would be considered by the Working Committee at its night sitting.

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE'S COMMUNIQUE

The District Magistrate, Amritsar, issued the following press communique:—

The licence of the Hindu Mahasabha procession included the condition that no one in uniform resembling that of the armed forces will be allowed to take part nor would any arms be carried. On arrival at the volunteers corps, I found a large number of volunteers wearing uniforms which definitely resembled those of the armed forces and some volunteers carried arms. I asked the organisers, including Sir Gokulchand Narang and Lala Keshab Chander to abide by the terms of the licence. After protracted discussion among the organisers, it was announced by Rai Bahadur Mehr Chad Khanna, the commander of the Mahavir Dal at the pandal, that they would take out the procession with volunteers in the original uniform. On receiving this information the Superintendent of Police cancelled the licence at 6.45 p.m. The procession had meanwhile started with some of the volunteers with naked swords. After the order cancelling the licence had been announced to the procession by the Magistrate in charge of the procession the procession dispersed peacefully.

Dr. Gokulchand Narang subsequently issued a statement pointing out that the communique issued by the District Magistrate was entirely against facts.

The Open Session of the Hindu Mahasabha

Silver Jubilee Session—Amritsar—26th. December 1943

The Welcome Address

Amidst scenes of great enthusiasm and in the presence of over 50,000 people, representing all parts of India, the Silver Jubilee session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha opened on the 26th December, 1943 at 3-30 in the afternoon at Tilak Nagar, Amritsar where the Indian National Congress held one of its historic sessions a quarter of a century ago. The pandal had been artistically decorated for the occasion and a large number of women in colourful costumes were present in the women's enclosure. Thousands of people who could not gain admission assembled outside the pandal to hear the leaders' speeches which were relayed over the microphone. Among those present on the dais, which accommodated over two thousand delegates and members were Dr. N. B. Khare, Overseas Member, Government of India, Dr. B. S. Moonje, the Maharaja of Cossimbazar, Dr. Wadhvani and Rao Sahib Gokul Das the two Sind Ministers, Raja Narendra Nath, Raja Maheswar Dayal Seth, Bhai Parmanand and Mr. Khaparde, ex-Minister, C. P.

A unique ceremony took place as Dr. S. P. Mookerji, the President-elect entered Tilak Nagar amidst deafening shouts of "Dr. Mookerji ki Jai" and "Hindu Mahasabha ki Jai". A young student applied 'blood Tilak' to Dr. Mookerji's forehead—blood to wash off slavery from the face of India.

The proceedings began with the "Bandematram" song by local schoolboys. Messages wishing success were received from Veer Savarkar, Mr. K. M. Munshi, Commissioner Mr. Tsang, Commissioner for the Republic of China in New Delhi, Sir Arok Kumar Roy, Law Member, Government of India, Sir Radhakrishnan, Sir Shadi Lal, Maharaja of Kapurthala, Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister, Dewan Bahadur Krishnaswami Iyengar, Mr. Jannadas Mehta and others.

The release of political prisoners and the appointment of a committee by the Mahasabha to devise an effective machinery for resolving the political deadlock created by the resignation of the Congress Ministries and the intransigence of those in power were urged by Sir Gokulchand Narang, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the President and delegates to the Silver Jubilee session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

Sir Gokulchand Narang said : The 'no-party' leaders seem to have exhausted all their resources without making any impression on the Government. The Mahasabha has to consider whether it would not take the matter in hand and devise an effective machinery for resolving this deadlock. It may have to appoint a committee for going into this matter in a serious, determined and systematic manner. The committee, if appointed, will explore ways and means to compel the Government to abandon its policy of evasion and procrastination. This committee, if you decide to appoint one, would welcome the co-operation of those members of other communities who believe in the integrity of India and the emancipation of their country.

Dealing with the Mahasabha's relations with other communities, particularly the Muslims, Sir Gokulchand Narang said : "We value their friendship and co-operation and I have no hesitation in conceding that their co-operation would facilitate and expedite the settlement of the Indian question. In order to secure their co-operation we have made and would be prepared to make every kind of reasonable sacrifice. If they are prepared to be regarded 'citizens of India', we should be prepared to give them all reasonable assurances for safeguarding their religion, their culture and any other interests which they may consider, particularly theirs.

"There are, however, limits beyond which it will be suicidal not only for the Hindus but the country as a whole to go. We cannot, for example, agree to the vivisection of our country and must oppose every attempt to cut up India into opposing units. Nor can we agree that being in a heavy majority in the country, we should be reduced by constitutional jugglery to a position of minority or even to a position of equality with any other community or all communities put together. I have often publicly declared, that the bogey of Pakistan is being raised to frighten the Hindus, the real object being to secure 50 per cent or disproportionately high representation for the Muslims in the Legislature. If the choice lay between

the two alternatives I would sooner agree to Pakistan than to the disturbance of our clear majority in the Central Legislature.

Proceeding, Sir Gokulchand Narang pleaded that the Mahasabha should take in hand the preparation of a revised scheme of Government of India which would do justice to all with the help, if necessary, of the patriotic Muslims and representatives of other communities who believe in the integrity of India and democratic principles. Without anticipating what the Mahasabha or any of its representatives selected for the purpose might do, Sir Gokulchand Narang earnestly suggested, that they should try to get rid of communal electorates. He also emphasised that a mere reshuffling of the personnel or portfolios in the Executive Council would not satisfy the thirst for freedom with which the heart of India was burning. Such a reshuffling might serve as a temporary expedient during the war but nothing short of Dominion Status with all the privileges defined in the Statute of Westminster would satisfy this thirst. The Mahasabha, he said, should clearly declare this as its immediate goal with the co-operation of all those, irrespective of their religious or political creed, who would love to see their country free and would be prepared to strive and suffer in the cause of India's freedom.

TREATMENT OF HINDUS IN PUNJAB

Sir Gokulchand Narang also related the wrongs that a bigoted and fanatic majority consisting mostly of ignorant villagers in the Punjab was inflicting on a minority. He said : "While in the Hindu majority provinces scrupulous care was taken to safeguard the cultural interests of the Muslims, the cultural interests of the Hindus in the Punjab are being ruthlessly sacrificed at the altar of Muslim communalism. Their industry and commerce have been crippled. A large section of the population have been deprived even of the valuable freedom which they possessed in the pre-autonomous days, viz., the freedom to seek redress in civil courts. The Punjab has in fact already been converted into Pakistan and the mere fact that the Government of the Punjab is called a Unionist-Government is only a camouflage. In reality it is nothing but a Muslim League or a Pakistanist government under a false label. The Ministry is with one exception entirely recruited from one class of people and the one, forming the exception, has openly declared that he represents no community or class in particular as he was returned from a non-communal constituency, viz., the Punjab University. He has been described at public meetings by one of his own colleagues as a 'talethoo' or an underling. The main body of the Hindus of the Punjab have, therefore, no one in the Government to look after their interests.

Sir Gokulchand Narang placed before the Hindu Mahasabha a comprehensive programme for Hindu sangathan and stressed that every effort should be made by public men and various Hindu organisations to minimise the differences between one religious sect and another, between one organisation and another and between one group of Hindus and another. He said : "The Hindusabhites should not look upon the Congressmen as untouchables and the Congressmen should not look upon the Hindusabhites as untouchables. The goal of both is the same. The Hindu sabbhites are nationalists to the core and have complete independence as their ultimate goal. They are attached to the Hindu Sabha because they consider that so far as the particular interests of the Hindus are concerned they can be guarded by the Hindu Sabha alone. The Hindus are the mainstay of the Congress and if they are weak the Congress will also become weak."

Presidential Address

After Sir Gokulchand Narang had read his address, Dr. B. S. Moonje, General Secretary of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, proposed the name of Dr. S. P. Mookerji for the presidential chair. The proposal was seconded by Bhai Parmanand of the Punjab and supported by delegates from various provinces. Dr. Mookerji was unanimously voted to the chair and received a great ovation from the audience.

He was garlanded by Sir Gokulchand Narang as he occupied the chair. Dr. Mookerji then delivered his presidential address. The following is the full text of Dr. Mookerji's speech :—

In the unavoidable absence of our President-elect, Veer Savarkar, due to illness which we deeply regret, I have been called upon at a very short notice to preside over this session of the Hindu Mahasabha. It will not be, therefore, possible for me to survey in full detail the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha during the last year or to lay before you a comprehensive programme of work such as a President under normal circumstances would like to do. I am, however, sensible of the

honour done to me and the responsibility placed on me and I would confidently ask for your full co-operation in the conduct of the deliberations of the session.

The great province where we meet and the historic city where we assemble have played their part nobly in the chequered history of India, sharing proudly the joys and sorrows alike of both a Free Hindusthan and an oppressed India. We meet today at one of the most critical periods in the history of British India. Vast and intricate problems have to be solved in the furtherance of political and economic, social and cultural emancipation of India, affecting the rights and liberties of millions of Indian people. It is our special responsibility to examine them at every step both from the standpoint of India as a whole and of the welfare of Hindus, the protection of those paramount interests must be our constant care.

Let me in the first instance convey to you and through you to the rest of India the deep gratitude of Bengal for the spontaneous sympathy and solicitude displayed by one and all during the recent famine crisis. We have special reasons to thank the Punjab for what she has done for us. I shall not dwell at length on this great catastrophe which must have involved the loss of more than a million of human lives. But let me emphasise that the famine was not due to any pranks of nature but was the product of maladministration and misrule. It is indeed the greatest blot on British rule in India. Relief measures have been conducted through official and non-official channels but the people of Bengal do not wish their existence to depend on charity. No Government which calls itself civilised has the right to exist unless it can so formulate and administer its policy as to keep the people under its charge free from minimum want and privation. If one-thousandth part of the misery that fell on Bengal had taken place in England or America, it would have shaken the very foundation of any existing Government. Today there are hope and cheer in many quarters on account of the enormous rice crop with which nature has just blessed Bengal. Let us not forget, however, that if Government bungles in the coming months as it has during the past, even a bumper crop will not save Bengal. Again, the suffering people have become so devitalised and diseases are so rampant that death-roll will not decrease in any appreciable manner unless effective measures are forthwith taken for better nutrition and treatment. The entire social and economic structure of Bengal has received a terrible shock and Bengal must pass through an intensive and extensive programme of rehabilitation. This is a gigantic task which can be performed only by the joint efforts of Government and the people. This co-operation is absent today because the ministry now in power lacks in both efficiency and integrity and does not enjoy the confidence of large sections of the people of the province.

DEADLY WAR

We are passing through a war which both in respect of its enormity and brutality is unprecedented in the history of mankind. India has been dragged to this war not of her own free will but on account of the decision of your rulers. There has been a lot of discussions regarding the aims of the war and of the peace that is to follow. The Hindu Mahasabha took up the most realistic attitude consistent with India's dependence. It was not prepared to put undue reliance on the declared war or peace aims of great Britain or the Allied Powers until it had a clear proof of their genuineness with reference to our own country. If the war is being fought today for a new world order that would be based on justice and fairness and not on domination and exploitation, India's claim for freedom becomes irresistible. The principal sphere where the Hindu Mahasabha under the wise guidance of Veer Savarkar has asked the Hindus to take the fullest advantage of the war situation is in respect of recruitment to the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. India has been kept unarmed by her rulers mainly out of a policy of fear and distrust. To day the war emergency and British interests have demanded a revision of its policy. A country that is unarmed and unprepared to defend itself from military aggression cannot retain its freedom even for a single day. The Hindu Mahasabha has consistently held the view that it would be suicidal for Hindus to throw away this opportunity for militarisation. When the war started, the proportion of Hindus including Sikhs in the Indian defence forces was less than one-third. Today it is nearly three-fourth of the total strength of the different defence units of India. India has demonstrated that her youth is capable of the highest skill and bravery in various spheres of military activity and to them I offer my sincere gratitude for their patriotic zeal and achievement. A stigma on your national fitness, arbitrarily imposed in the past, is thus completely eradicated. If our country were politically free, how larger could the defence forces have become

and how energetically would all have thrown themselves into action for the defence of their own motherland. History affords us numerous examples which go to show that while a paid army, however trained, fails to rise equal to the occasion when it has to face a crisis, such as in Burma, an army, composed of the children of the country whose freedom is at stake, valiantly defies death before yielding to the enemies of their motherland, such as in China and Russia. Mr. Churchill proudly expressed his satisfaction by stating that India today had more white soldiers than she ever had in her history. Recently the number of negro soldiers has also been considerable. Here again is an instance of wilful distrust exhibited by our rulers against Indians. If the Indian defence forces are good enough to fight decisive battles in stormy fields outside the Indian soil, why should they not be concentrated in the discharge of the sacred task of defending their own country?

The political deadlock continues and there is no sign that the British Government is going to end it during the war. The speculators from Bombay and Delhi tried to anticipate the Viceroy's Calcutta speech and proved to be false prophets. The British Government today wants the world to believe that all is well with India and if she is not politically free it is not due to British refusal, but her own disunity and disruption stand in the way of full political progress. I have no desire to narrate here the eventful history of the Indian struggle since 1939. Be it said however that notwithstanding vigorous propaganda conducted by the British Government, the fact remains that there is no settlement today because our rulers do not wish to part with power. The British Prime Minister frankly states that he had not become his King's Prime Minister to liquidate the British Empire. There was a time not even a quarter of a century ago when Indians were repeatedly told that India was not fit for self-government and that was why Indian freedom was delayed. Today the cry has been modified and the blame is attributed to religious differences in India which alone prevent England from parting with power. The Secretary of State often shudders to think how anarchy and civil war will raise their heads and spread their fury if there was a full transfer of power to Indians. Mr. Amery forgets that India is governed today through a machinery that is ill-suited for a national crisis and is already passing through a state of organised anarchy with her civil liberties crushed and her national life choked against the will of her people. Indeed the conclusion is irresistible that neither will the British easily offer a settlement that will give India what she wants nor will the Allied Powers who are themselves in troubled waters, take an active interest in giving India a fair deal. Every strong country in the world dreams of consolidation and expansion of its economic and political power and looks upon India as a veritable milch-cow.

INDIAN PROBLEM IN COLD STORAGE

It is almost certain that there will be no solution of the Indian problem during the war. Will the solution improve after the war? If the Allied Powers do not win the war, what will happen to India need not be discussed at this stage. But consistent with recent events, if the Allied Powers win the war, there is no guarantee given by Great Britain that India will get a fair deal, even though there may not be a previous communal settlement due to the obstructive tactics of the Moslem League. At the Peace Conference every nation will have its own problems to look after and India, if represented by the favourite nominees of the British Rulers themselves, specially tutored to prove the much advertised diversity of Indian life, may well become an object of pity and contempt in the eyes of the rest of the world, India will not then become a lost dominion to England but will be safely restored to her perpetual care. I may be accused of harsh judgment. But in view of our past experience of broken promises and pledges, we should not hesitate to speak out our mind and frustrate, if possible, any design to keep India under perpetual bondage.

There is another school of thought in foreign lands regarding themselves as friends of India, who assert that however reactionary British policy may appear to be during the war, public opinion in allied countries including England will compel the British Government to agree to a fair deal for India after the war. There is no doubt that the war which is costing the lives and happiness of millions of people is shaking the foundations of many beliefs and dogmas and as an aftermath of this colossal suffering they look forward to the building up of a new world order based on justice, freedom and equality. But did such people in the past or will they in future succeed in rightly controlling the dominant policy of their country's administration against a powerful combination of vested interests, economic and imperial?

In any event if we simply wait for freedom to fall on our lap as an act of spontaneous mercy from our rulers or foreign allies, if any, we shall either remain slaves for ever or the so-called freedom that will then come will not be worth having at all. Today the main obstacle to Indian freedom according to our rulers is Hindu-Moslem disunity. The history of this division will show how it has been kept alive and fanned by a well-regulated State policy of "divide and rule." The absence of communal agreement did not stand in the way of British Government promulgating fundamental constitutional changes, good and bad, during the last 35 years. Having lavishly decorated the framework of the Indian constitution with religious and communal colouring the British Government now innocently expects its own pampered agents to give up their close preserves and stand for a higher ideal of Indian unity and nationalism. This policy of fomenting disruption and disunity has not remained confined between Hindus and Muslims as such but has spread amongst various tribes, castes and classes. The only solution of the Indian problem is rigidly to exclude all extraneous considerations, based on caste and religion from the field of politics. We stand for equal political citizenship of all without any distinction. I admit that there are classes and communities which are backward and which have to be given special protection for educational and economic advancement. The constitution itself should guarantee the preservation of religious, social and cultural rights of different classes. It is easy to conceive how bitter would be the fate of any country in this world, even including England, if it is placed under the political domination of an unscrupulous imperial power which will aim at emasculating its manhood, draining its resources and fanning disruption among its subjects based on social, religious or other differences. How easily can it not thus create compartmental rights within the framework of the country's constitution? Today India's real voice is choked and it never reaches the four corners of the world without ruthless censoring. If justice is to be done to India Government has to retrace the mischievous steps it has taken for consolidating its power in India and hand over power to the representatives of the people, based on a constitution recognising equal rights of citizenship for one and all. The Hindu-Moslem question has been a thorn in the way of Indian freedom. The policy of appeasement pursued by Hindu leaders, sometimes actuated by sound motives, has not produced any tangible results. There have been Moslem leaders in India, well-known for their courage, patriotism and breadth of vision but they have received no recognition as their community's representatives from the hands of our rulers. Others were brought on the scene who were uninfluenced by the higher considerations of the welfare of their country and concerned themselves with the so-called advancement of their own community.

UNCOMPROMISING ATTITUDE.

Patriotism can never be purchased at the market place by an open bidding. If the Indian National Congress, as the mouthpiece of progressive Indian public opinion, was prepared to concede even of fundamental issues affecting national solidarity and self-respect for the sake of winning the support of Moslem leaders, the British leaders, the British representatives were always ready at hand to offer a higher price at every stage and thus frustrate a combination between the two great communities of India. To day, the Moslem League which is acknowledged by Government as perhaps the only spokesman of Moslem view-point in India, has raised the cry of breaking India into fragments as a condition precedent to political settlement. None knows better than the British Government itself that Pakistan is a sheer impossibility. We oppose it not merely because Hindus cannot tolerate the idea of vivisection of their Motherland but because both economically and politically such a division will be dangerous to the welfare of India as a whole.

The Bengal famine of 1943 has demonstrated the unity of India and the economic absurdity of Pakistan. The British Government knows this simple truth, it however suits its purpose to encourage Moslem League to carry on its present campaign for it deepens communal animosity and bitterness and affords an easy excuse to our British masters to justify their over-lordship of India. Let it be clearly understood that there can be no settlement with the Moslem League on the basis of Pakistan. The Hindu Mahasabha has made efforts to come to an agreement with all political parties so as to present a united front. Its representatives even approached the Moslem League on the subject. It endeavoured to find out the maximum agreement on fundamental issues so that a joint demand may be put forward for an interim national government during the war with the co-operation of all important political parties including the Indian National Congress. It

received no encouragement from the representatives of Government nor from the Muslim League. I do not believe in patched up pacts and compromises. If a settlement with the League is not possible in view of its obstructive and anti-national policy, it does not mean that we should be slow to offer our hand of comradeship to those Moslems and members of other communities whose political ideals are consistent with the unity and freedom of India.

So long as communal considerations loom large in the field of Indian administration and sinister Anglo-Moslem conspiracy continues, the Hindu Mahasabha must function as an active and fearless political organisation which can both defend the rights of the Hindus and of India as a whole. The Indian National Congress has undoubtedly played a valiant part in the battle of Indian freedom during the last 40 years. There can be no political settlement in India without the Congress and the continued detention of its leaders and workers retards the well-being of the country. People ask why the Hindu Mahasabha should continue as a political organisation at all and not leave the field entirely to the Congress. It is well-known how in the past the rights of the Hindus were jeopardised in political spheres because of a misguided policy of appeasement pursued by some Congress leaders. That danger is not yet over and the more vigilant and powerful the Mahasabha becomes, the greater is our chance of averting the disaster. The Congress claims the right of representing all. It has always been anxious to avoid being dubbed as a Hindu organisation, although the vast majority of its supporters are Hindus. So long as a third party remains in India and an aggressive, anti-national and anti-Hindu-Muslim League party holds its sway over the Moslem masses, enjoying the favours of the British Government, and planning to veto the elementary rights of the majority, Hindus for their sheer existence must have their own political organisation to fight for their own rights and liberties. The political goal of the Hindu Mahasabha is complete independence of India. The Hindu Mahasabha stands for joint electorate, if necessary, with reservation of seats. It asks for no special favour for Hindus in any part of the country. While the Hindu Mahasabha feels that the rights of minorities should receive due protection and the culture and religion of all should be held sacred, the essential services of the State must be kept pure and efficient and not made the playing of communal or party-politics. Its aim and policy are therefore consistent with the welfare and advancement of India as a whole. If a time comes when religious and communal considerations disappear from the field of Indian administration and all parties are swayed by one common national ideal, there may be no need for a separate political organisation for Hindus as such. Politics detached from realities is not only meaningless but dangerous. Let us not forget what we really are today. Unarmed and emasculated, we are kept down-trodden as slaves; it is because Hindus unfurled the flag of revolt and claimed for their country, irrespective of caste, creed or community, that free political status which is its birth-right that they became the eye-sore of their alien rulers. That is the reason why at every step in the course of the Indian political struggle it is the Hindus who have dared to revolt and suffer for the emancipation of their country. To curb and cripple the Hindus, the British Government knows it, is to give a death-blow to the cause of Indian freedom and nationalism. If that is a reality, let us have the courage and statesmanship to face it boldly and to devise ways and means to struggle against it. We offer our hands of co-operation to all parties and communities. We want to see built in India a constitution that will give freedom to every son and daughter of this great country and any one who feels ennobled by this ideal will be received by us with open arms.

SEVERAL FIELDS OF ACTIVITY

It is not in the sphere of politics alone that the Hindu Mahasabha has to play a vigorous part. It is true that until we gain our political freedom we cannot get rid of our economic slavery. India's expansion in the sphere of trade, commerce and industry cannot develop on lines consistent with her maximum welfare until and unless her affairs can be administered by her own chosen representatives freed from the domination of foreign exploiters. At the same time we cannot sit idle and allow the present policy of drift to continue without serious detriment to our future existence. Every Provincial Hindu Mahasabha must make it a point to explore the reasons for the continued deterioration of certain classes of Hindus in economic spheres and formulate its own programme for rehabilitation. In the field of social reform the Hindu Mahasabha has a tremendous responsibility to discharge. Today Hindus are divided into castes

and sub-castes which have led to a severe weakening of the entire fabric of Hindu society. It is not for me to discuss the merits and demerits of the caste system, but I do plead with all the earnestness in my command the supreme need for *sangathan*. The Hindu Mahasabha must instill into the minds of all Hindus an imperishable idea of oneness, irrespective of any caste distinction. Be it remembered that persons belonging to the so-called lower castes are often the source of indomitable strength and courage among the Hindus. It is amongst them more than amongst others that Hinduism burns in an atmosphere of unselfish devotion and piety and to allow them to be weakened either socially or economically is to strike at the very root of Hindu consolidation in India. Indeed we want a new race of preachers and workers who will be imbued by the age-old message of equality and service propounded by Hindu Dharma, armed with an enlightened outlook consistent with the needs of modern age. They should spread themselves far and wide and carry with them a new message of hope and good will. There is also a special need for progressive organisation amongst Hindu women. If the society is to be revitalised, our mothers and sisters have to play their due part in the re-building of the Indian nation. It is a matter for gratification that steps have been taken by some of our enlightened sisters from western India to consolidate Hindu women under the banner of Hindu Mahasabha. The Hindu Mahasabha must give this new venture the support that it undoubtedly deserves.

No organisation can ever succeed to influence the minds of the people unless it is based on truth and justice. The peril that confronts India today needs a Hindu organisation which will be fully alive to the undying national spirit of India. We have however to guard against petty jealousies and party factions. Today the Hindu masses have to be guided and made to understand where the national peril lies. If the Hindu Mahasabha is utilised merely for factional purposes or is usurped by people who have no contact with the masses but merely cling to the organisation for their own personal ends, the Hindu Mahasabha will never take root in the country. I, therefore, earnestly call upon all our organisations to re-organise themselves and to do everything possible to avoid weakness and disunity in their ranks. We must also give the fullest opportunity to new recruits to come to our organisation and carry forward a well-planned scheme for progressive expansion. Every six months there should be a vigorous drive for increasing our rolls and our work should not remain concentrated in cities and towns but must touch the lives of the remote villagers. Let us not make the mistake of concentrating on politics alone. Let us build up a new social and economic order within our present limitation and make every Hindu feel, however poor and helpless individually he may be, that there is a powerful organisation behind his back which will uphold his rights whenever trampled upon. We do not intend to go out of our way to harm anyone but if others unjustly encroach upon our rights and liberties, we must be trained to stand united and resist such attacks without fear or hesitation. Communal peace will come automatically if both communities remain strong in thought and deed actuated by a common endeavour to serve their common motherland. The definition of Hindu enunciated by Hindu Mahasabha includes every son and daughter of Hindusthan who regard this country as their fatherland and pursue any religion born of this land. It is from this stand-point that I specially ask the Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and others to come and stand by the Hindu Mahasabha and not permit themselves to be swayed by the sinister tendencies of division practised by our rulers.

SILVER LINING

India has occupied a unique place in the history of human civilisation. Though political freedom has been denied to India for the last 200 years and her original inhabitants were for many centuries deprived of their supreme hold upon their own country, Indian culture has remained unconquered from generation to generation. The invader came and went. Kings, emperors and generals appeared and disappeared but the soul of India remains unconquered. It is her remarkable spirit of assimilation which turned generations of invaders into ultimate contributors to the growth of the mighty Indian civilisation. Hindus and Moslems sometimes fought with each other and at other times lived together in amity and brotherhood, both contributing to India's welfare. I believe now more firmly than ever before that as soon as the third party withdraws communal peace will reign again in India. It may be that during the period of transition out-

bursts of mutual distrust and jealousy may disfigure the Indian soil. Ultimately the choice before the two communities must be either peace based on mutual tolerance and understanding or civil war. I plead with all the emphasis at my command that the former may be the final outcome of Hindu Moslem relationship in India. We have both witnessed the bloodbath that is washing mighty territories in this world, governed by people claiming to have reached the highest pinnacle of civilisation during the last one hundred years. This nauseating display of brute force and furious mutual onslaught in which countries that called themselves civilised are taking part today serve as a stern reminder both to Hindus and Moslems in India that the path towards India's safety and liberty lies in mutual tolerance and understanding based on truth, justice and freedom. If ever that settlement comes, Hindus must watch and see that their rights are properly protected. If on the other hand, goaded by the present anti-Hindu policy of our rulers, the Pakistani mentality deepens amongst Moslems of India, there can be no peaceful settlement of the Hindu-Moslem problem in this country. If that happens, then also the Hindu Mahasabha must remain ready and has to play its part in defending and maintaining the integrity and safety of India, no matter at what cost.

The future that lies before us appears to be dark and dismal. Our country is today invaded by a foreign enemy and being ourselves bound to the chariot-wheels of a foreign power, we cannot mobilise our unlimited resources in men and materials, according to our own light, to resist the invasion. We want India to be the mistress of her own destinies. We want no foreign rulers, either of the Eastern or the Western brand. If this is a crime, every patriotic Indian is ready to face the consequences. It is true no country can live by itself and it must make alliances. The countries with whom a free India will make alliance will depend entirely on the treatment that such other countries will accord to India. The future of the world will be saved and a third great war will be prevented, only if the great powers uproot from their minds all ideas of domination and exploitation. There must be a confederation of free nations which must be bound together for protecting human civilisation being battered to pieces as in the past. In this gigantic task of world reconstruction, India with her eternal message of simple living and high thoughts, of love and justice, truth and tolerance can play a tremendous part which few other nations can do. This message, however, India can impart faithfully and well if she can act as an independent entity and not as a hired agent of the British Government. The struggle for Indian liberty must go on from generation to generation until our goal is reached. Today vested interests created by British patronage have deadened the activity of large sections of Indians. Let the Hindu Mahasabha not base its activities merely on negative or destructive slogans nor on hatred and bitterness. To fight oppression and injustice is a virtue and let us practise this virtue whenever occasion arises; but let us at the same time prepare the minds of our countrymen on positive and constructive lines which alone can make them better fitted to offer resistance fearlessly and without expectation of favour. Not by an emotional abandon but by rigid self-discipline, by constant self-sacrifice and elaborate national preparation can we hope to turn a country of slave into a land of free men. Generations of brave soldiers may die before the light of real freedom dawns on Hindusthan. Let us feel inspired by the justice of our cause. Let the sacredness of our right for economic and political liberty touch the heart of every man and woman of India with an undying restlessness and fervour so that they may be completely identified with the great cause. If it be ordained that they will die before achievement comes, may they be born and reborn in this holy land of ours until freedom is completely achieved. Oppressed though we are, let us gather in our own the voice of Mother India and proclaim that we are not beaten. Indeed, let us say without fear that the greater the repression, the more undaunted will be our spirit and fearless our heart. Let us sound the clarion call of unity and action in full remembrance of the stern realities of our nation's dangers and pitfalls and resolutely carry the flag of a free Hindusthan to be unfurled for ever and always in that cherished Temple of Liberty, Harmony and Justice which will be India's greatest offering to the cause of uplift of human civilisation.

Resolution—Second Day—27th. December 1943

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION

The second sitting of the Silver Jubilee session of the Hindu Mahasabha commenced at 4 P. M. to-day in the Pandal. About 50,000 men and women were

present, including delegates from the various provinces who were seated on the dais with the Mahasabha leaders and the members of the Reception Committee.

Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mukherjee* received a tremendous ovation as he entered the Pandal and took his seat on the dais. The volunteers of the Bajrang Akhara from Rawalpindi were in charge of the arrangements in the Pandal and they had a hard time in controlling the crowds.

The proceedings commenced with the recitation of Vedic Mantras.

The first resolution moved from the Chair, expressed "profound sense of loss and sorrow at the death of *Shyt. Ramananda Chatterjee*, the veteran journalist, who, as a former President of the Hindu Mahasabha and as a fearless exponent of the nationalist cause, has rendered signal service to his community and his country."

The second resolution mourned the deaths of *Sir Ganesh Dutt Singh* of Bihar, *Lt. Patwardhan*, and the Maharaja of Bikaner, the Maharaja of Jhalwar and some other Hindu leaders.

Moving the above resolutions from the chair, Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mukherjee* said that the gentlemen mentioned above were great sons of India and they were united in serving the cause of their community and their country as a whole.

The two resolutions were passed.

The third resolution, which was also moved from the Chair and adopted unanimously, read: "This session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha views with great concern the continued illness of *Veer Savarkar* and prays to the Almighty for his speedy recovery and restoration of his health."

HINDU SANGHATHAN MOVEMENT

Mr. *Kharparde* moved:

"In order to promote Sanghathan among Hindus, the Mahasabha makes the following recommendations to Hindus all over the country and calls upon them

(a) To develop a spirit of determined insistence on Hindu rights and of stubborn resistance to all encroachments on their rights and interests.

(b) To mitigate the rigour of caste as far as possible and to make determined efforts to abolish subcastes among the various main castes.

(c) To take immediate and effective steps for the assimilation and economic amelioration of the Depressed Classes.

(d) To eliminate or minimise, as far as possible, all points of difference between various organisations and sections of the Hindus and emphasise and maximise points of agreement by eschewing all kinds of avoidable controversies.

(e) To popularise Hindi language and Devanagari script by making it compulsory in all Hindu educational institutions and by other available means. In order to universalise Hindi script, this Sabha appeals to the people of Bengal, Utikal and Gujrat to adopt the Devanagari script in place of their respective scripts.

(f) To provide occasions for meeting and dining together and exchanging views and ventilating their grievances by holding district and provincial conferences at regular intervals and to establish local Sabhas all over the country to serve as vigilance centres to keep an eye on the day-to-day happenings in their respective localities, so that whenever there is any encroachment on Hindu rights, they may raise their voice and make contacts with the rest of Hindu India.

(g) To make arrangements for congregational prayers in all places of worship at fixed hours, particularly at Hindu festivals and at places of pilgrimage, for congregational prayers on occasions like the Kumbh, etc., in which all pilgrims should be invited to join, to recite after their usual daily prayers the following Vedic text which embodies an injunction to all to march together, to speak with one voice and to work with one mind, namely,

(h) To take necessary steps for the protection of Hindu widows and orphans with a view to prevent leakage of numerical strength of the community and to make them useful members of society.

(i) To maintain and emphasise regard for the cow as a powerful unifying factor and also on account of its economic importance.

(j) To make arrangements that the Hindus of various provinces may keep in touch with the march of events in other provinces and may take necessary steps to prevent any injustice being done to their brothers in any particular province. It is incumbent upon the Hindus of those provinces where they are in a majority to take special care of the Hindus of those provinces where they are in a minority.

(k) To promote physical fitness amongst the Hindus by providing Akhadas, gymnasiums, playgrounds and necessary equipment for physical culture all educational institutions, Hindu Sabhas and other organisations.

(1) In order to consolidate and maintain the integrity of the Hindu community and in order to add to its strength, this Sabha calls upon the Hindus to be on their guard and take necessary steps to prevent any apostasy among them, to reclaim the apostates and to provide facilities for the acquisition of fresh adherents to their ranks."

Mr. *Khaparde* said that if the Hindus undertook to work together on the above-mentioned lines they would be united and no one would be able to do them any injustice or attack their rights.

The resolution was seconded and supported by Mr. *Vishwa Nath* (Calcutta), Mr. *Priithvi Singh Azad*, General Secretary of the All-India Depressed Classes League, and *S. Lal Singh Samundri*. Mr. *Azad* said that the Harijans were part and parcel of the Hindus. He was sorry to say that even the Hindu Shastras were misrepresented and *Manu* was quoted to show that the treatment which some misguided Hindus accorded to the Harijans had the sanction of the Shastras. He had no doubt that the Harijans would form the vanguard of the Hindus. He expressed the hope that any injustice which had been wrongly done by some misguided people to the Harijans would no longer be tolerated by the right-thinking Hindus.

Sardar Lall Singh Samundri, an old Akali, supported the resolution. He referred to the controversy among the Akali and the Hindus. While condemning the utterances of some of the Akali leaders, he said that the Hindus and the Sikhs were followers of the same culture and civilization and the Sikhs were a branch of the same tree. He referred to the sacrifices which the great Gurus of the Sikhs had made for the protection of the Brahman and the cow. No one could ever divide the Hindus and the Sikhs and any attempt which might be made by any section of the people, either from among the Hindus or the Sikhs, to divide them must be condemned most strongly.

The resolution was passed.

MAHASABHA & POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. *L. B. Bhopatkar* (Poona) moved the following resolution:—

"This Sabha declares with all emphasis it commands that it is All-India Hindu Mahasabha alone which is competent to carry on any political negotiations with the Government or any other party on behalf of the Hindus and that any decision or agreement arrived at without the consent of the Mahasabha shall not be binding on the Mahasabha and the Hindus."

Mr. *Bhopatkar* said that at a time when efforts were being made to have a new constitution drafted for India it was absolutely necessary that it should be made clear beyond any doubt that the Hindu Mahasabha alone represented the Hindus of India and if any settlement regarding the future constitution of India was to be made it must be made with the Hindu Mahasabha. The right of the Congress to represent the Hindus was denied as the Congress could not represent the Hindus and any settlement which did not have the sanction and support of the Hindu Mahasabha must be discarded by the Hindus.

The resolution was seconded by Prof. *Deshpande* (Nagpur) who criticised the Congress for following a policy of appeasement of the Mussalmans and held the Congress responsible for having encouraged Muslim communalism.

R. B. Kunwar Guru Narain, supporting the resolution thought that there was no Hindu in India today who did not believe in the aims and ideals of the Hindu Mahasabha. It was on account of the existence of Hindu Mahasabha that the Cripps' proposals, which entailed Pakistan, could not be accepted in spite of the efforts of Mr. *Rajagopalachariar* and men of his way of thinking. There were people among the Congressmen who were anxious to have the proposals accepted but it was because of *Veer Savarkar* that the real game of the sponsors of the proposal was exposed and the proposals fell through. He maintained that the Hindu Mahasabha would not let Pakistan be established. They would resist its establishment. He declared, "I have no doubt that the province where Pakistan was born would provide its 'Kabaristan' also". The speaker extended an invitation to the Congressmen to cease to feel shy of the Hindu Mahasabha and join that organisation which was a truly representative and national organisation of India.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

SATYARTH PRAKASA

A resolution condemning the "agitation started in certain quarters against the publication of *Satyarth Prakash*, an old book held as sacred by the Hindus in

general and the Arya Samaj in particular," and trusting that the "Government would not be led by any mischievous propaganda to take any steps against this old and sacred book," was moved by *Kunwar Chand Karan Sharda* and seconded and supported by *Mr. Anand Priya* (Baroda) and *Mr. Kundan Lal Lamba*.

Mr. Chand Karan Sharda moving the resolution, said that he would not let any one interfere with their sacred book, the "Satyarth Parkash" and they would shed their last drop of blood to protect it. Referring to the speech of *Mr. Aurangzeb*, Premier of N. W. F. P., the speaker said, "if the Musalmans hold out the threat that there would be Aurangzebs born in India again, let them know that if that happened there would be born *Shivajis* also." *Mr. Anand Priya* said that if the Musalmans would persist in their demand for getting the "Satyarth Parkash" proscribed the Hindus would be forced to ask that the Koran might also proscribed.

Mr. Kundan Lal Lamba expressed the view that the agitation which was now going on for getting the "Satyarth Parkash" book proscribed appeared to be a foretaste of what Pakistan would be like. The agitation had convinced the Hindus that if Pakistan came to be established, each one of their religious books and the whole of their literature might be proscribed. *Mr. Lamba* declared that the Hindus would defend their religion with all their might and he suggested that as a counter-blast to the present movement every Hindu should make it a point to have a copy of "Satyarth Parkash" in his or her house. The resolution was passed amidst loud applause.

VIVISECTION OPPOSED

Lala Khushal Chand Anand moved the next resolution "re-affirming the Mahasabha's faith in the integrity of India and its determination to resist all attempts made in any quarter for its vivisection." The mover maintained that the establishment of Pakistan was not a possibility and those who were demanding Pakistan might at the most get a *Kabaristan*. The best antidote to Pakistan, in the opinion of *Lala Khushal Chand*, was that every neo-Muslim of India should be reconverted to Hinduism because once everybody in India became Hindu there would be left no need for anyone to make a demand for the establishment of Pakistan. The first sad experience of what a Pakistan would be like was by now known to the people of Bengal who had suffered most terribly and he had no doubt that the combination of the physical strength of the Punjab and the intellect of Bengal would not let Pakistan be established.

Raja Narendra Nath, seconding the resolution in a short speech, said that the demand for the establishment of Pakistan was a senseless demand. He had no doubt that this would never be realised. It was an impracticable demand. He mentioned how any transfer of population between the various provinces was impossible. *Mr. Jinnah* was a very shrewd man, and the *Raja Sahib* had no doubt that he himself knew that the demand for Pakistan was an impossibility. He was merely using it as an appeal to communal passion.

Mr. Bhoj Raj Ajvani (Sind) supported the resolution and said that not a single Hindu in his Province would agree to the demand of Pakistan.

Mr. Karandikar (Poona), who supported the resolution, maintained that he had no doubt that the brave Hindus of the Punjab, who had a glorious history of sufferings and sacrifice, would never let Pakistan be established. They had a long and unique Sikh history at their back which had perhaps no parallel anywhere, and even the modern history of the sacrifices of the Sikhs of the days of *Guru Ram Singh* was a guarantee against any attempt at the vivisection of India.

Mr. Ram Kishen Pandey (Mahakoshal) supported the resolution which was also supported by *Mr. Devendra Nath Mukherjee* from Bengal and *Dewan Dalip Chand* (N. W. F. P.). *Mr. Pandey* had no doubt that the great provinces of the Punjab and Bengal would never yield to the proposal of Pakistan. *Mr. Mukherjee* said that the Pakistan cry was the result of a conspiracy between the British Government and the Muslim leader *Mr. Jinnah* to weaken the Hindus. This move, he said, would never succeed. The resolution was passed unanimously. The session then adjourned.

Resolutions—Third Day—28th. December 1943

The Silver Jubilee Session of the Hindu Mahasabha concluded to-night after passing a number of important resolutions.

The proceedings started at 3-30 P. M. amidst scenes of unabated enthusiasm. About 50,000 men and women were present. On the dais were seated All-India Hindu leaders, including *Dr. Moonje*, *Mr. Khaparde*, *R. B. Mehr Chand Khanna*,

Mr. N. C. Chatterji, L. Narain Datt, Mr. Kanwar Chand Karan Sharda, Raja Maheshwar Dayal, Kunwar Guru Narain, Mr. Advani and other presidents of the various provincial Hindu Sabhas.

There were seated on the dais also *Sir Manohor Lal*, Finance Minister, Punjab, *Sir Tek Chand, R. S. Gokal Dass* and *Mr. Heman Das*, two Sind Ministers.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerji was loudly applauded as he entered the pandal and was greeted with loud shouts of "*Dr. Shyama Prasadki Jai.*"

Before *Dr. Mukerji* came to the pandal, there was an unhappy incident which annoyed a large section of the audience, which demanded repeatedly an apology from some one sitting on the dais, who had uttered something against the Congress. The incident happened when *Mr. Khushdil*, who was a popular poet with the audience was reciting a poem in which he referred to the sacrifices made by the Congress and its leaders. While the poem was being recited, the mammoth gathering raised loud and continued shouts of "Congress Zindabad," "Mahatma Gandhiki Jai." At this, some one sitting on the dais made some objectionable remarks against the Congress which appeared to have enraged the audience and they repeated shouts of "shame, shame" and "withdraw." *Mr. Keshab Chander*, General Secretary of the Reception Committee, tried to pacify the crowd but the audience continued to demand the withdrawal of the words uttered against the Congress. This went on for some time without order being restored.

When, however, *Dr. Mukerji* came and occupied the presidential seat, he was made aware of what was happening. *Dr. Mukerji* got up to pacify the crowd. The President of the Hindu Mahasabha, addressing the crowd, said that he was sorry to learn that during his absence, some misunderstanding had been caused by the remarks of some one sitting on the dais. He begged of the audience to remain calm and quiet and if any unjust reflection had been caused by some one's remarks against Gandhiji or the Congress, he was standing before them as the President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha to offer his regrets. This was greeted with deafening cheers and loud shouts of "Congress Zindabad" and "Mahatma Gandhiki Jai."

Continuing, *Dr. Mukerji* said that he had himself, on several occasions, criticised the Congress with regard to its policy and even Gandhiji's policy, but there was no justification for any Congressman to run down the Mahasabha as there was no justification for any Hindu Mahasabha member to run down the Congress. Every one had his greatness and they were not there to defame each other.

Concluding amidst loud cheers, *Dr. Mukerji* said : "Those stalwarts who have built up the Congress with their sacrifices will be remembered with the deepest affection not only by us but also by the coming generations." This declaration pacified the whole audience.

GRIEVANCES OF HINDUS

Mr. Bhoj Raj Ajwani, General Secretary of the Sind Provincial Hindu Sabha, moved the following resolution :—"In view of the fact that the Hindus of Moslem majority provinces have repeatedly complained to the Hindu Mahasabha regarding the unjust and oppressive treatment meted out to them by the Muslim Government of these provinces, this Conference requests the President to appoint a Committee of 2 persons to enquire into the grievances with instruction to submit their reports as early as possible."

Moving the resolution, *Mr. Ajwani* said that there existed no law and order in Sind so far as the Hindus were concerned. No day passed without dacoity being committed somewhere in Sind and it was surprising that in almost every case the victims of these dacoities were Hindus. There was no Hindu house in Sind which was considered safe and neither the property nor the women of Hindus had any protection of law under the present administration. *Mr. Sayed*, who was a prominent Muslim Leaguer in Sind, had started a new movement called "Liberation from the Hindus". This was the most ill-conceived movement which had encouraged the Muslims who were now not afraid of even taking forcible possession of the lands belonging to the Hindus. The Hindus had a most negligible share in the services and in key posts they were almost nowhere. There was a wave of communalism which had swept over the whole province. It was time that the plight under which the Hindus were living was enquired into and the injustices which were being done to them under the Muslim League Ministry be made known to the world.

The resolution was seconded by Pandit *Jagannath Dutt* (Punjab), Mr. *A. S. Satyarthi* (Punjab), *Swami Sutikshsan Muni* (Sind) and Mr. *Mangal Sain* (N. W. F. P.). Mr. *Satyarthi* referred to the grievances of the Hindus in the Punjab under the Unionist Ministry. He mentioned how a licence for opening a slaughter house in Nurpur was granted which had given cause for annoyance to the whole community and was against the established practice of that area. Then again education in the Primary School was being Muslimised by affording no facilities for the teaching of Hindi in the Primary Schools. Provincial autonomy in the Punjab had proved a curse. He appealed, on behalf of the Hindu mind, which he claimed to represent, to Sir *Manohar Lal*, Finance Minister of the Punjab to use all his influence to have status quo maintained in the above-mentioned matters. He hoped that Sir *Tek Chand* would also see that the slaughter house which had been allowed to be opened in his own home would not be allowed to remain there.

Mr. *Harish Chander Ghosh* supporting the resolution further said that an irresponsible Ministry had been installed in the office and that the Ministry had been responsible for treating the Hindus of Bengal, who were really the makers of modern Bengal, most shabbily. Their religious rights were being trampled under foot. He accused the official agency for conniving at the misdeeds of the Muslim rulers who were allowed to go simply because they happened to be Muslims even though they might have committed most heinous crimes. Mr. *Ghosh* said that the intellect in Bengal was being suppressed by intellectual dwarfs and what was most disgraceful and painful too was that the language and literature of Bengal was being Muslimised.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

POLITICAL SITUATION

R. B. Mehar Chand Khanna moved the main resolution on the political situation in the country. The resolution ran as follows:

"That, in view of the deplorable political situation prevailing in the country and in view of the deepening sense of frustration paralysing the national will, the Conference expresses its deep resentment at the attitude adopted by the British Government inasmuch as they have not yet responded to the national demand for the immediate declaration of Independence and of the immediate formation of a National Government.

"The Conference records its opinion that the latest speech delivered at Calcutta by Lord *Wavell* is profoundly disappointing, and in the interest of the effective of India and economic rehabilitation of the country, it is essential that Mr. *Amery* should be removed from the position of the Secretary of State for India that the political deadlock should be ended, that all the political prisoners and detainees should be released forthwith and that negotiations be started for co-ordination of all nationalist elements in the country and for mobilising the resources of India for national defence.

"This Conference reaffirms its adherence to the principle of preserving the integrity of India and urges the introduction of federation in the future constitution of India with a strong Centre. It demands that no freedom should be accorded to the provinces or to any community or section to secede from the Indian federation. It also demands that representative assemblies, both in the Centre and provincial spheres, should be constituted on the principle of joint electorate and 'one man, one vote.'

Commending his resolution to the session, *R. B. Mehar Chand Khanna* referred to the political history of the past years. But that period, he said, was not a very long time in the history of the nation. They knew how the promises made during the last Great War were fulfilled by the Britishers in the form of Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh and it was, therefore, no surprise that they could not depend upon mere promises which might be made now for granting India independence after the present war. He was glad that the *Cripps'* proposals, which were full of poison, had been rejected by the nationalist India. If the British claim that they were fighting for freedom and democracy was true and sincere, Mr. *Khanna* asked why the Atlantic Charter was not applied to India. India had been rewarded even before the end of the war in the form of ruthless repression which was started on the 8th of August, 1942, after the arrest of *Mahatma Gandhi* and other Congress leaders.

The Hindus were being depicted by the British propagandists in America as fifth columnists and pro-Japanese. The significance of this propaganda, said Mr. *Khanna*, would be well understood by the Hindus of India. He, however, declared

that the Britishers or their propagandists would not be able to deceive India or the world for a very long time though they might succeed for some time. India was now awake and would not tolerate any humiliation. It would not tolerate the Pegging Act, the White Australian policy. Addressing those who, according to Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna, believed in a New World Order and who, according to him, were today busy forming an Anglo-Saxon alliance, the speaker said that if they would form an Anglo-Saxon alliance, they in India and the East also believed and would form an Eastern Federation. To his British friends R. B. Mehr Chand Khanna wanted to say that when it was a fact that they would have one day to go from India it was better that they left India as India's friends. Concluding Mr. Khanna said that if Mr. Churchill would not like to preside over a Cabinet under whose care the King's Empire would be liquidated he had no hesitation in saying that India had not produced great men like Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Veer Savarkar to see India remain in chains.

Dr. Moonje, who seconded the resolution, stated that the resolution provided an irrefutable proof of the fact that the Hindu Mahasabha was not a communal organisation but represented the Nationalist India.

Mr. Neelkanth Das M. L. A., (Central), supporting the resolution, said that the resolution before them represented the National demand. This demand would not be conceded by the Britishers in their present mental mood. The Britishers said they were prepared to part with power if the people of India would agree between themselves. That was an impossible condition, said Mr. Neelkanth Das, so long as the third party remained. He declared, "let Englishmen clear out. This will make it possible for the two parties to come to an agreement without any fear of each other or the fear of Pakistan. The Englishmen are sandwiching India between British Imperialism and Pakistan which is their creation."

Continuing, Mr. Neelkanth Das said that if the Britishers wanted to remain in India on the plea that they had to discharge their responsibility to the minorities and other interests then they must cease to talk of parting with power in favour of India. He asked the British Government to be sincere in what they said and reminded them that they were committed to the Federal Constitution for India and they should make no attempt at dividing this country. He further said that he wanted not merely the removal of Mr. Amery from office because if Amery goes a Schuster might come. He therefore stood for the abolition of the office of Mr. Amery lock, stock and barrel.

Raja Maheshwar Dayal (U. P.) said that while nations were busy fighting the battle of freedom and democracy, whatever little freedom India enjoyed had evaporated and in the Hindu majority provinces one would find Governors' dictatorships established and those who demanded freedom had been put behind the bars. The speaker said India did not want to wait and could not depend upon promises to be fulfilled after the war. Political freedom was the only remedy for the ills of India, and he said that the Anglo-Muslim conspiracy to impede the efforts for the attainment of India's freedom should not be allowed to succeed.

Messrs Ashutosh Lahiri (Bengal), Shastri (Behar), Loka Mal (Sind) and Dr. Narang further supported the resolution. Dr. Narang, in the course of his speech, referred to the policy of appeasement which, he said, had failed because the appetite of the Muslims continued to increase as they were given more and more to eat. The Muslim Leaguers had also used the slogan 'quit India' but their position was that the Britishers should divide India before going away. The speaker thought that there was not a greater opponent of India's freedom than Mr. Jinnah who was undoubtedly the biggest impediment in the way of India's liberation. Dr. Narang thought that India's freedom depended solely upon the solidarity of Hindus whom he advised to unite and resolve with full determination to do the great thing without any fear.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

HINDI BANNED AMONG DETENUS

Mr. Kundan Lal Lamba moved a resolution condemning the Punjab Government's action in prohibiting the political prisoners and detenus in the Punjab Jails from using Hindi as the medium of their correspondence with friends and relatives. The resolution demanded that the right for writing letters in Hindi should be restored. Mr. Lamba condemned the Punjab Government's attitude towards the Hindus and their language. The resolution after being seconded by Mr. Rameshwar Mishra (Bihar) was passed.

BENGAL FAMINE

Mr. N. C. Chatterji moved the third resolution regarding the famine situation in Bengal which ran as follows :—

"This Conference records its opinion that the Bengal Famine, which is responsible for the loss of lacs and lacs of lives and for widespread misery, destitution and malnutrition affecting over a crore of Bengal's population, is a man-made famine. The food crisis and the sufferings of the people were accentuated by the bungling and inefficiency of the Moslem League Ministry which was installed in office by manoeuvring on the part of the then Governor of Bengal. The price racket and the black market were encouraged by the policy of the League Ministry which appointed its party supporters as Government agents for the purchase of rice in famine-stricken Bengal and who were advanced more than five crores of rupees for such purpose.

"This Conference offers its heartfelt sympathy to the victims of famine and their families and calls upon the British Government to appoint an impartial commission to enquire into the causes of the famine and to report as to how the persons responsible for this famine should be dealt with.

"This Conference calls upon the Government to appoint a representative Committee composed of the leaders of all parties to formulate a scheme of rehabilitation in order to restore the social and economic life of the Province."

Mr. N. C. Chatterji, while proposing the resolution, gave a detailed account of the distress in Bengal caused by the famine conditions. The claim that one of the biggest blessings of English Rule in India was that famine for all times had been ended had once again been proved to be false. It was a pity that in the province of Bengal, the home of *Desh-Bandhu Chitta Ranjan Dass*, whose charity knew no bounds, people had died for want of food. Rice had been sold at Rs. 80 to Rs. 130/- per maund with the result that the poor man was not able to purchase rice for personal consumption. He pointed out that the Bengal Government had failed to serve the people of Bengal in their distress.

Dr. Moonje, seconding the resolution, said that Bengal represented the intellect of India and if intellect was in danger, then the whole body becomes useless. It was therefore necessary that intellect should be saved.

Lala Brij Lal, Inspector, Arya Schools, while supporting the resolution delineated the sad story of Bengal famine and referred to the useful work which the Arya Samaj had done to help the people of Bengal. He stated how *Lala Khushal Chand* and the speaker himself with other workers of Arya-Samaj had gone from village to village, helping the dying people.

The resolution after being further supported by *Mr. Ram Niwas (Agra)* was passed.

LATHI-CHARGE

Mr. Rama Nath Kalia moved the resolution regarding the lathi-charge on the presidential procession at Amritsar. The resolution ran as follows :

"Whereas the police of Amritsar committed assault on the procession organised by the Reception Committee in honour of the President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha Session, Amritsar, when it was proceeding in perfect peace and order and thereby caused injuries to a large number of innocent persons by indiscriminate lathi-charge, the Conference places on record its strong condemnation of the action of the district authorities and urges the Government to take action against the local officers who acted in a thoroughly irresponsible way."

While *Mr. Kalia* was commending the resolution to the meeting, there was a hostile demonstration and uproar in the huge gathering which demanded of the mover to tell them what practical steps were being taken to "avenge the insult offered to the Hindus." The audience did not allow *Mr. Kalia* to proceed and order was restored by *Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji* with a little difficulty.

Dr. Mookerjee addressing the gathering, said that none felt more humiliated than the speaker himself over the insult that had been offered to the procession. The sense of humiliation was all the more, because they were all unarmed and those who dispersed them were fully armed. He said that it was not for the Hindu Mahasabha to decide what action they should take in the matter but it was for the people of the Punjab and more specially of Amritsar to consider and to decide how to answer that deliberate insult which had been offered to them. He wanted to remind the audience that he and other delegates were their guests and they could not do anything without their fullest consent and without them. *Dr. Mukherjee* said : "I can tell you, however, one thing for myself that if you, the people of Amritsar decide to take out any procession at any time you will have

only to send me an intimation and wherever I might be I will come to you at once to join that procession." But Dr. Mukherjee wanted them to remember that nothing should be done without proper preparation. It was not wise to go to face one's opponent unarmed. He regretted that the local authorities had found a very lame excuse and "fell upon innocent processionists in the darkness of the night." He was sorry to say that the communique issued regarding the incident was a tissue of falsehood and the action was so unwarranted that the authorities did not seem to acknowledge it. Dr. Mukherjee said that when he talked about the matter to Sir *Manohar Lal* who was with him this morning, he was surprised to learn from him that the highest officers had been told that there was no lathi-charge. Sir *Manohar Lal* was shown the injured persons and the speaker hoped that an enquiry would be made though he was unmindful whether an enquiry was conducted or not, because his main consideration was that the truth about this cowardly attack be made known to the world outside.

After this Dr. Mukherjee put the resolution to the House which accepted it.

There were, however, loud protests from a large section of the public who told Dr. Mukherjee that the provincial leaders would not do anything in the matter. Shouts against Sir *Gokul Chand* were raised by a section of the crowd who demanded from him to give up his Knighthood. Dr. Mukherjee however, succeeded in pacifying the audience.

OTHER RESOLUTIONS

A number of resolutions were moved from the Chair which were all passed. These resolutions included assurance to the Hindu ruling chiefs of *Mahasabha's* fullest support in any agitation against them by non-Hindus and pressing upon them the necessity of introducing progressive reforms in the administration of their States. A resolution regarding *Kashmir State* was also passed and Muslim League propaganda against the State was condemned. Dr. Mukherjee said that the *Maharaja of Kashmir* would have their support in his effort to prevent any onslaught of communalism for which preparations were being made. Resolutions regarding the Hindus of *Baluchistan* and the administrations of *Hyderabad* and *Biopal States* vis-a-vis the Hindus, the formation of a constitution sub-committee, the establishment of all-India Hindu Women's Conference and protesting against the licence for a slaughter house at *Nutpur*, and the appointment of a vigilance committee and to safeguard the interests of the Hindus in the minority provinces were passed.

In the course of his concluding remarks, Dr. *Shyama Prasad Mukerjee* while thanking the Reception Committee, said that he and the delegates had been deeply overwhelmed by the kindness of the people of the Punjab and the wonderful response while the Punjab had given to the cause of the Hindu *Mahasabha*. It appeared to him that the heart of the brave Hindus of the Punjab had been touched and he appealed to the Hindus of the Punjab that they should build up the *Mahasabha* and make it a living organisation. The Punjab of *Lajpat Rai* stood as an ideal for the whole of India and even though Bengal had produced great men, yet the name of *Lala Lajpat Rai* was a household word in Bengal. *Lajpat Rai* and others were great leaders of yesterday and the present Hindu youth was going to provide leaders of to-morrow; and if any one of them thought that the present leadership could not do better, he appealed to the youths not to sit idle but take up the work in their own hands. He wanted new blood to be infused in the *Mahasabha* not for solving the problems which confronted the Hindus of the Punjab and Bengal but the whole of India. He said: "If we can unite, we can keep the Eastern and the Western gates of India well-guarded and the Punjab and Bengal can thus maintain the integrity of glorious India." He wished to make it clear that the Hindus of Bengal and the Punjab and other minority provinces were not opposing Pakistan for their own sake but as sons and daughters of the great India.

He appealed to the Hindus of the Punjab to take full advantage of the enthusiasm which had been created and organise themselves. The *Mahasabha* was a democratic organisation and any one could become its member by paying four annas and those who thought that the *Mahasabha* leadership was not doing good work, should join it and give it an impetus. He wanted the Hindus to stand on their own legs to protect their rights and the rest would follow.

Referring to the resolution regarding the political demands, Dr. Mukerji said that the demands contained in that resolution were in fact the National demands. Referring to the Muslim League, the President of the *Mahasabha* said that at Karachi the cat had come out of Mr. *Jinnah's* bag, where he demanded

British to quit India after dividing it. It seemed that having lost all hopes of getting Pakistan from the Hindus he was now looking to his British friends and asking them to divide India and then quit this land. What a colossal ignorance of practical politics it was. Dr. Mukerji was, however, glad that Mr. Jinnah had at least learnt to use the term "quit India" and he hoped that he would very soon forget the demand from the British to divide India and would work for the first part of the demand. Dr. Mukerji said that he was prepared to let the Britishers live in India as employees and not as masters. He said that the Mahasabha was opposed to no one but it wanted to maintain the liberty and integrity of India because for the Hindus there was no other country but India and they could not have their holy Ganges and the Jamuna divided by the support of British sword. No one could cut India into pieces if the Hindus were determined to maintain its integrity and he, therefore, appealed to every Hindu youth to instil in his own mind the ideas and ideals of Hinduism which preached fraternity and equality. Referring to the significance of the sword on the Hindu flag, Dr. Mukerji said that the sword was not meant to kill others but to afford protection. Dr. Mukerji made a passionate appeal to the Hindus to learn not to fight shy of realities but face facts and set their own house in order. He concluded the speech amidst loud applause.

The A. I. Hindu Students' Conference

Second Session—Amritsar— 28th December 1943

Presidential Address

"In this storm-tossed world with its racial prejudices, machine-guns and U-boats, with its narrow nationalism, make the democratic teaching of the 'Vedanta' the leading principle of social ethics for humanity at large." This observation was made by Mr. N. C. Chatterjee, Working President of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha presiding over the Second Session of the All-India Hindu Students' Conference held at Amritsar on the 28th. December 1943.

Referring to Pakistan, he said: "In spite of all financial or other considerations we must refuse to exchange our undivided and indivisible India for any independent fragmented units. Pakistan would mean the crippling of both the Hindus and the Muslims in Bengal and in the Punjab and if the Bengalees and the Punjabees unite, Pakistan shall vanish into oblivion.

Mr. Chatterjee said: "I thank you for electing me to the Chair. The land of the Vande Mataram offers its respects to the land of the Vedas. The greatest achievements of the Indo-Aryan race were accomplished in this sacred land of the five rivers. Since the dawn of human civilisation the Punjab has been the birth-place of Indo-Aryan culture. This Holy City of Amritsar is sanctified by the sacred memory of the Sikh Gurus and martyrs and by the tragedy of Jalianwalla Bagh. There has been a close spiritual and political contact between the Punjab and Bengal, which was reinforced by the inspiring messages delivered by Surendranath Banerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal and Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das.

The Punjab was and is indissolubly linked to the rest of Hindusthan and, God willing, with your devotion and sacrifice, the Punjab shall never be severed from Hindusthan.

SANGHATAN

Remember the future of Akhand Hindusthan will depend on the success of Sanghatan. Do not divide, do not alienate, bridge all gulfs. Hindu-Sikh concord will dispel all fears of Pakistan. If the Bengalees and the Punjabees unite, Pakistan shall vanish into oblivion.

Famine-stricken Bengal has special lessons to impart to the student world of Hindusthan. Due to starvation, malnutrition and diseases millions of our people have perished. We are grateful to the Punjab and other provinces for the spontaneous assistance rendered to famished Bengal. Particularly, the splendid work done by the Arya Samaj deserves mention.

Bengal is now in the grip of malaria and cholera and there is paucity of quinine and other drugs which can save human lives. In some villages in East

Bengal more than half the population had been swept away by famine and its aftermath. In some places in Midnapore skulls are lying on the road side, the jacks having devoured the rest of the famished victims of the famine.

This famine has clearly demonstrated that a strong Central Government is essential to cope with such a crisis and to co-ordinate the activities of the provinces. It will be a blunder to weaken the Centre in the future Constitution of India.

YOUNG MIND AT SEA

The young mind in Bengal and different parts of India has been in a state of ferment. There is a feeling that the present political and social fabric has merely tended to perpetuate the wretchedness of the masses. The old slogans and shibboleths do not work any more. The young people, particularly the students, are demanding a more realistic and more humane ideal. The idea of mere charity is repulsive to the poor masses. The starving and famished people demand justice upon this earth. Those of you who have toured in the famine-stricken areas and have actually seen people dying of hunger and have seen men and dogs fighting for a morsel of food, can realise how a frightful mental chaos comes upon the young mind when it comes in contact with such unfathomable depths of misery. After two centuries of civilised rule there has been little effort genuinely made for the redemption of the masses. It is clear that another means of salvation must be found.

Freedom from famine can be secured by freedom from alien bondage. India wants her freedom. Unfortunately Mr. Churchill has denied it. We wanted to fight as a free nation side by side with the united nations. The Hindu Mahasabha was practical. It gave a lead to the country to militarise and to equip our people in order to defend our country. Mr. Churchill has declared that he has not become the first Minister to work for the liquidation of the British Empire. The Atlantic Charter has been drowned in the Bay of Bengal. Truly, India has confronted Britain with a first class moral problem in this war. It is foolish to say that our people are pro-Japanese. Our sympathy and spontaneous help to the cause of freedom transcends all bounds of classes or creeds or parties. We want to play a creative role in human history, provided our own country is assured of freedom and democracy. We want Britain to demonstrate in actual practice that this is not an imperialistic war. In this moment of perplexity boldly face and examine the problems of the day.

We are convinced that the defeat of Hitler is certain. We are also convinced that with the collapse of Fascism Imperialism shall die. Independence shall come. The world forces are all operating in our favour. Neither Churchill nor Amery nor any combination of politicians can prevent Hindusthan from achieving freedom. You must be building up your organisation and your character in such a way as to be ready for Independence when it comes. However much the differences in India may be exaggerated or exploited, whatever may be the propaganda of the nominated emissaries of the British Government in the various countries, India is to-day determined to get both justice and freedom this time.

Many Indian leaders are still rotting in jail and the cleavage between India and England is widening. The powerful apparatus of British propaganda has been working in full swing against them. We wish Sir Stafford Cripps had not taken up an attitude of "either take it or leave it." The break-down of Cripps' negotiations was a first class political tragedy. But how could we conscientiously accept the scheme which wanted to poison the constitution in India with the germ of vivisection? How can we willingly be a party to a scheme which had a big dose of Pakistan? You should realise the difference between the redistribution of provinces and the self-determination of provinces. Every Hindu is a Federalist. The cardinal principle of federation is that it should be an indissoluble union of indissoluble states. Pakistan would mean the crippling of both the Hindus and the Muslims in Bengal and in the Punjab. The grim realities of famine have demonstrated beyond the shadow of doubt that in order to feed our starving people food-stuff must come from Hindusthan. Pakistan would have completely converted Bengal into a Kabaraasthan!

OPPOSE PAKISTAN

Remember that we are opposed to Pakistan because our ideals, principles and objects are diametrically opposed to those of the Muslim League. The Muslim League wants vivisection of our country and keep it practically under British subjection and want to assert that the Muslims are a nation whose political destiny must be different from that of the Hindus. Some misguided Hindu leaders hav

fallen into traps of the Pakistanists and encourage the idea of separation on financial grounds. They think that we shall get rid of the financial drags and subventions if we accept Pakistan. As a matter of fact Pakistan will be economically bankrupt and will be devoid of those economic resources without which civilised states cannot function. But in my opinion in spite of all financial or other considerations we must refuse to exchange our undivided and indivisible India for any independent fragmented units. Remember, sentiment and ties of culture and historical affinity are the strongest forces in human life.

In this storm-tossed world with its racial prejudices, machine guns and U-boats, with its narrow nationalism, make the the democratic teaching of the Vedanta the leading principle of social ethics of humanity at large. The Hindu must shake off their inertia, their listlessness, their decaying and drafting attitude, infuse into our social system a new vitality, a new consciousness and stamp out all flagging among the youth."

The Assam Provincial Hindu Sabha

Muslim Penetration in Assam

At an emergent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Assam Provincial Hindu Sabha held at Nowgong on the 4th. September 1943, the following lengthy resolution was adopted. The resolution runs as follows :—

(A) This meeting of the Assam Provincial Hindu Sabha views with alarm and indignation the decision of the Government of Assam as embodied in their resolution on Land Settlement published in the Assam Gazette of 25th August, 1943, and considers the said decision as wholly unwarranted and calculated to affect the interests of the Hindus most injuriously and as such condemns the same for the following among other reasons :—

(i) That the Land Settlement Policy as adumbrated in the said resolution is to all intents and purposes nothing but the resuscitation under new and hollow pretexts of the ill-conceived Land Development Scheme of June 1910 which was hatched in the teeth of vehement Hindu opposition by the last Saadullah Ministry with the mischievous motives of letting down the Hindus of the Province to a state of political non-entity and perpetual serfdom by reducing their numerical strength.

(ii) That *fortunately* for the Hindus His Excellency the Governor of Assam took up the administration of the Province into his own hands after the liquidation of the last Saadullah Cabinet, and the chorus of protests raised by the Hindus persuaded His Excellency to give a decent burial to the hated Land Development Scheme. The abandonment of the Sind Scheme was an act of superwisdom on the part of His Excellency in as much as it averted the acceleration of communal ill feeling. The revival of the very same Scheme at the present moment when the enemy is already battering at our doors, and when perfect unity among the communities is indispensably necessary for successful prosecution of War efforts and for warding off aggressions, is an act of colossal unwisdom and betrays the reactionary policy stubbornly pursued by the Moslem Majority Ministry regardless of the well-being of the province. The faked purposes set out in the preamble to the resolution have been ingenuously contrived to hoodwink the people and camouflage the most ignominious design for perpetuation of Moslem domination in the province.

(iii) That the Ministry have miserably failed in their duty of protecting and safe-guarding the interests of the different non Moslem communities of the province and by allowing settlement of lands to the Moslem immigrants far in excess of the area warranted by the percentage basis have deliberately perpetuated a wrong of the highest magnitude to the indigenous people, and to the Hindus in general. As a matter of fact 93 p.c. of the lands hitherto thrown open for settlement have been allotted to immigrant Moslems. The resolution published in the Assam Gazette of 25th August, 1943 does not contain any safeguard for the Hindus nor any provision for bringing about parity in the allocation of lands to different communities according to percentage on the population basis. The contemplated allo-

cation of lands in surplus portion of Grazing Reserves to different communities "in proportion to their needs" is but a design underlying the entire Scheme and is but an instance of the application of the opportunity policy pursued by the Moslem Leaguers whenever and wherever the percentage basis does not suit or ill-fits their own purposes.

(iv) That the attitude of the Government towards the professional graziers has always been characterised by callous indifference and gross apathy and the gradual opening of lands referred for professional graziers has not only grievously hurt the interests of such graziers but has also culminated in an appalling dearth of milk, which in its turn has had the natural effect of working as a insidious poison corroding the very life and vitality of the people. Further curtailment of lands reserved for professional graziers will immeasurably intensify the difficulties of milk-supply and will therefore be a positive menace to the health and growth of people. The present move of the Ministry as envisaged in the resolution in question is therefore anti-national in the extreme and betrays an unscrupulous disregard for the real welfare of the people. The insertion of the clause—"when these are found to be surplus to requirements" in para 2 (a) of the Government resolution is nothing but an eyewash and a clever ruse for warding off adverse criticisms. The professional graziers who are practically all Nepalese have not received as much attention as they so richly deserve both from the point of view of the vital problem of milk-supply and also from that of the tremendous sacrifices of the Nepalese people for the cause of the King Emperor and the Country. The present move will surely place insurmountable hurdles on the way of prosperity and expansion of their profession.

(v) That the deforestation of vast areas of lands has already caused a decrease in the rainfall and so the production of crops has not shown any appreciable corresponding improvement and increase, notwithstanding large areas of land being settled with Moslem immigrants during recent years. Further deforestation as contemplated in the Government resolution will still more lower the rainfall and affect the climatic conditions of the Province and also increase the possibility of frequent heavy floods with disastrous effects on crops. The revenue derived by one hand will be spent by the other in giving gratuitous relief and in combating the concomitant evils of either floods or draughts. The golden vista of increasing the provincial revenue and of flooding the country side with abundance of crops may in consequence prove itself to be an ethereal project never destined to materialise as a tangible reality.

(vi) That Government resolution has now the natural effect of emboldening the land-hungry Moslem immigrants to carry on according to plan, a tremendous onslaught on all types of Government Reserves without waiting for the authorised allotment of lands on just and equitable considerations. An orgy of lawlessness has already been let loose with the blessings of the single-group Moslem Majority Ministry behind it, and reports of mass-encroachments on a well-organised scale on almost all places of vantage by the Moslem immigrants are daily pouring in. The District authorities have become helpless and passive onlookers only on account of the Ministry having given a long rope to Moslem immigrants for trampling down the existing laws of land settlement with unrestricted license.

(B) This meeting of the Assam Provincial Hindu Sabha in view of the facts and reasons stated above strongly urges on the Government to drop the entire Scheme of Land Settlement as embodied in their resolution and for vindication of law and order to take immediate drastic measures against the encroachers on Government land in different parts of the Assam Valley.

The All India Muslim League

Council Meeting—New Delhi—4th. November 1943

MR. JINNAH RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT

The All-India Muslim League Council which was held at New Delhi on the 14th. November 1943 re-elected Mr. *M. A. Jinnah* as the President of the League for the coming year. The Secretary's announcement that no other name had been suggested by any Provincial League was greeted with loud applause.

The Council passed a resolution strongly condemning "the dastardly and insane assault" made on the person of Mr. Jinnah in Bombay and thanking Almighty God for saving the life of "the beloved leader of the Mussalmans."

The Council further congratulated Mr. Jinnah on his providential escape and prayed that he might be spared long to guide the hundred million Muslims of India under his great leadership to their cherished goal of Pakistan.

The resolution was moved by *Nawabzada Rashid Ali*, President, Lahore Muslim League, and supported by Moulana Jamal Mian and Khawaja Sir Nazi-muddin, the Bengal Premier.

Mr. Jinnah's Address

"This manoeuvring on the part of the Government to create the impression that there should be a united Central Government of India shows that the die-hard Tories who rule Great Britain do not wish to release their hold on this country," said Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, addressing the League Council to-day.

Mr. Jinnah said he not only wanted the Muslims but every man in this sub-continent to realise this. When the British talk of Central Government, the sole object was that neither Hindus nor Muslims were to be freed. It meant the continuation of British domination and British rule.

Pakistan, he said, postulated freedom for Hindus as well as Muslims. There could be no Pakistan without the Hindus getting freedom in their Hindustan.

Referring to the proposal of Akhand Hindustan or National Government he said the crux was the establishment of Hindu Raj and Hindu dominated Government in this country. The results of this were so obvious to Muslim India, that they were to be transferred to a Hindu Raj and instead of the British garrison they would be kept under order by the Hindu garrison. Was it possible for the Hindu leaders, he asked, to accomplish or achieve this when the Muslims were fully alive, alert and vigilant? Could they expect Muslim India to sign their own death warrant?

Around these three rival schemes centred all the propaganda that filled the press and issued from the platform, since the Council last met, and barring this Mr. Jinnah saw nothing that had happened on the political horizon of India, that he should comment on. He was mentioning these issues merely in order to refresh the Council's memory.

Mr. Jinnah expressed concern over the developments in Lebanon and said that a resolution on the subject would be placed before the Council to-morrow.

Turning to the food situation, on which a resolution is to be moved to-morrow, Mr. Jinnah said that the Working Committee had given serious consideration to the matter and would not only make carefully considered proposals but also facts about the situation. He defended the Ministry in Bengal and declared they were doing their very best. When they got in, the conflagration had already started and Bengal was over-whelmed with a crisis. Some one was responsible for that conflagration. The Nazimuddin Ministry went there as a fire-brigade and were doing their utmost to put out the fire. He deprecated the activities of those who "even in the presence of death were wickedly using the occasion for political propaganda and for the attainment of ulterior objects." He said the famine in Bengal was man-made and was the greatest blot on the British Administration in India.

Mr. Jinnah referred to the affairs in Kashmir and said the situation there was really very serious. If the accounts reaching him were to be believed, he would say the situation was appalling. He appealed to His Highness the Maharaja to look into the matter and discharge his great responsibilities as a Ruler of the State, and the duty that he owed to his people, nearly 80 per cent of whom were Mussalmans. He should not allow this state of things to continue.

What is our proposal, asked Mr. *Jinnah*, offering a new definition of Pakistan as freedom for Hindus and Muslims alike. Without Pakistan forming the basis of

constitutional negotiations, he feared that no fruitful results would materialise, but he betrayed real anxiety that such a discussion should not be delayed any longer since loss of the present opportunity for mutual understanding would land both Hindus and Muslims in disaster. Failure to reach a settlement by negotiations, according to his reading of the situation, would be playing into the hands of our enemies. Who they are he left his audience in no doubt—British Raj means, he said, slavery for both Hindus and Muslims. He claimed to see through the sudden discovery by British publicists, new arguments underlying the necessity to maintain the unity of India, the famine in Bengal providing the latest text for such propaganda. Could the Central Government be really stronger than it is to-day, he wondered, if the Bengal Government shed any of its limited authority under Provincial Autonomy. Nevertheless the purpose of all this manoeuvring on the part of Britain was to perpetuate the system of Government under which Englishmen would remain at the top.

Only when Mr. Jinnah referred to the food situation in Bengal in the concluding portion of his address—that too after a gentle hint from *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*—did he seem to realise that the problem was capable of solution only by the united efforts of all parties and by the mobilisation of the resources of all-India. Mr. Jinnah contented himself with the observation that the famine in Bengal constituted the greatest blot on British administration.

BAN ON MEMBERSHIP OF ORGANISATION

Mr. Jinnah thanked the Council for the expression of their sympathy and joy over his escape. He did not want to say anything more on the subject. He appealed earnestly to every Muslim to come under the banner of the Muslim League, because therein lay their salvation. The constitution of the Muslim League was the most democratic that could be framed. There was no Muslim to whom the doors of the League were not open. If they were dissatisfied with the leader, surely, the remedy lay in their own hands. The leaders were the creatures of the will of the people and existed on their approval. They could remove him in 24 hours if they so wished, by exercising their right under the constitution of the party, but if they tried to settle things by knife and force, that would mean nothing but bloodshed, chaos and misery.

Mr. Jinnah said that he was responding to the call of the nation by cheerfully accepting his re-election, because it gave opportunities to serve the people.

Besides the four Premiers of Bengal, the Punjab, N. W. F. P. and Sind there were present at the League Council meeting, Mr. M. H. Gazdar, Mian Abdul Haye, Mr. Abdul Matin Choudhury and Khan Bahadur Khuro.

PUNJAB ASSEMBLY LEAGUE PARTY'S POSITION

Mr. Karamat Ali withdrew his resolution demanding a clear and definite statement from the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly regarding its attitude towards the Provincial and Central Muslim League Parliamentary Boards, and whether it maintained that the present Punjab Ministry had been formed by the leader of the Punjab League Party, as the parliamentary agent of the Muslim League. He was doing so, he said, in view of the decision of the League Working Committee to appoint a sub-committee to examine the constitution that had been framed for the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly.

OBJECTION TAKEN TO PORTIONS OF SWAMI DAYANAND'S BOOK

The Council unanimously passed a resolution moved by *Moulana Khwaja Abdul Ghani* and seconded by *Moulana Zafar Ali Khan, M. L. A. (Central)*, emphatically demanding from the Government of India that those chapters of *Swami Dayanand's book Satyarth Prakash* which "contain objectionable and insulting remarks against founders of religions, particularly against the Holy Prophet of Islam, be proscribed immediately."

LEAGUE MEMBERS AND KHAKSAR ORGANISATION

A resolution which imposes a ban on the Muslim Leaguers from having any connection with the *Khaksar* organisation was moved by *Chowdhury Khaliq-uz-zaman*, who said, that the *Khaksars* had jumped into politics in a most dangerous manner and to their policy of dictation none could submit. Had Mr. Jinnah submitted to the persuasions of the *Khaksars* to see Mr. Gandhi, where would the Muslim League be?

Mr. Chundrigar, President of the Bombay Provincial League, supporting, asked: "If the *Khaksars* consider that they are strong enough, why do they want to have

their wishes carried out by the Muslim League and not do it on their own?" He invited the Khaksars to leave their organisation and join the Muslim League and try to change the policy of the League according to their desire from inside and not by outside coercion.

Mr. *Gazdar* said that till lately they considered the Khaksars as a useful body, and prevailed upon the Punjab Government not to treat them harshly. The Khaksars to-day were following a policy hostile to the League and in the recent Sikarpur by-election, there was considerable interference by them.

Mr. *Hamid Nizami*, who rose to oppose the resolution, was constantly interrupted and heckled. He considered the resolution redundant in view of the already existing provisions that Leaguers could not join any other organisation. He thought that the resolution, which they were passing, would result in division among the Muslims. Mr. *Nawaz Khan* also opposed the resolution.

Mr. *M. Ashraf* conceded that the writings and actions of certain individuals in the Khaksar organisation could be condemned, but emphasised that they should not condemn the whole organisation. He was a sympathiser with the Khaksars, but if the Council passed the resolution, he declared, he would sever his connection with the Khaksar organisations.

Mr. *Jinnah* observed that there seemed to be some confusion in the mind of the opposition. The Khaksars in the past had confined their activities to religious and social matters. "It was for that very reason that I did my utmost to save that organisation from British repression. Since 1939, I have done everything with my whole heart and soul to see that it was not crushed". The moment they came into politics they were a separate body. "Are you or are you not satisfied that the Khaksars by their recent writings and actions have adopted a political policy and that this policy is hostile to the Muslim League? You cannot owe allegiance to two organisations at one time". Mr. *Jinnah*, however, made slight alteration in the text of the resolution, which as amended read: "The Council after careful and earnest consideration has come to the conclusion that the Khaksar organisation which was originally a purely social and religious organisation, is, as now shown by its writings and actions, pursuing a general policy which is hostile and antagonistic to the policy of the All-India Muslim League. In these circumstances, the Council resolves that no member of the Muslim League should hereafter join or continue to remain as member of the Khaksar organisation".

The resolution was passed with two dissentient votes.

'SYSTEM OF MANDATES SHOULD END'

The Council adopted three more resolutions. One resolution related to Palestine. This was adopted by the Working Committee of the League last night.

The other two resolutions related to Muslim countries in North Africa and Middle East. One of them urged upon His Majesty's Government in particular and other Allied powers that the territories recently released from the control of Italy namely Cirenaica, Libya and Tripoli should not only be not handed back to the Italian Government but they be constituted as independent sovereign States, that the "vicious system of mandates should be abolished once for all and the countries of which the mandates were held by Great Britain and France namely, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon be restored to the people of those countries to set up their own sovereign Governments of those territories. Having regard to the oft-repeated declarations by the United Nations that they seek to liberate the subject nationalities, this Council demands that the United Powers should urge France to liberate Morocco, Algeria and Tunis."

This resolution was moved by *Syed Zakir Ali* and seconded by Mr. *Hossain Imam*, both of whom pointed out that the Allied Powers had shown their keen desire to liberate the people now under the enemy yoke but were lukewarm to apply those principles of freedom and justice to people under their own domination.

The resolution was passed.

LEBANON DEVELOPMENTS

The second resolution referred to Lebanon and viewed with "profound alarm the grave situation that has arisen in Lebanon as a result of the action of the French authorities in forcibly suppressing the demand of full autonomy by the Lebanese and vied with satisfaction the clear declaration made by the British Government with regard to the recent developments that have taken place in Lebanon, reaffirming the solemn pledge guaranteeing the independence of that country. The Council further urges the British Government to take immediate steps to restore

normal conditions and to secure full independence for the country and thus prevent the situation from getting worse.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, moving the resolution stated that the statesmen of the Allied Nations should realise that the people of the East were as eager to secure their independence and freedom as those of the Western countries.

Maulana Jamal Mian stated that it was because of the hostility towards the French that the Lebanese had welcomed British forces during the present war in their country. The resolution was adopted.

PALESTINE QUESTION

Chaudhury Khaliq-uz-zaman moving the Palestine resolution traced the history of Arab-Jewish relations in that country. He referred to the protest of the Arab League against certain statements of Mr. Wendell Wilkie and Mr. Louis Fischer of U. S. A. and said that they did not know what those statements were but they knew that U. S. A. ranked in the forefront in all anti-Arab movements. He claimed that the Balfour Declaration originated from America. The Muslims of India to-day demanded that the policy embodied in the British White Paper should be adhered to. He reminded the Council that the Palestine issue would assume great importance immediately after the war and they should remain alert with regard to this question.

Mr. Latif-ul-Rahman seconded the resolution, which was adopted and the Council adjourned.

Resolution—Second Day—New Delhi—15th November 1943

FOOD SITUATION IN INDIA

The Council concluded its session this morning after passing a resolution on the food situation in India.

Mr. Jinnah disclosed that he had invited the Muslim Premiers of Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Sind and N. W. F. Province to meet him and his Working Committee at Delhi. Four of the Premiers had responded to his invitation while the Premier of Assam had deputed Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhry to represent him. They were at present engaged in formulating a common and unified policy for the five Muslim Provinces and it was their intention to have that policy accepted by other Provinces and by the Government of India. He was meeting the Premiers again this afternoon.

The resolution on food situation adopted this morning was as follows: "The Council of the All-India Muslim League having taken into consideration the present food situation in the country, particularly in Bengal, views with grave concern and alarm the tragic consequences resulting from it in Bengal and some other parts of the country: emphatically urges the Government of India and the British Government to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the food problem in the country and to remove distress prevailing in Bengal and other parts of the country and further urges the Government to take effective precautionary measures against recurrence of similar conditions either in Bengal or in any other part of the country. The Council calls upon the people of Bengal to give their whole-hearted support and co-operation to the present Ministry in Bengal which is doing its very best for alleviating distress prevailing in that Province in the future. The Council appeals to Mussalmans all over India to continue their help to the people of Bengal either in cash or in kind.

Sir K. Nazimuddin, speaking on the resolution, traced the history of the Bengal food crisis. He said that his Ministry took office on April 24. The situation then was that rice was selling in Calcutta at Rs 22 and Rs. 25 per maund while famine prices were ruling in other areas. About that time the Government of India announced their basic plan under which Bengal was to get 7,93,000 tons of foodgrains. Soon after it became evident that the basic plan had failed and the Government of India were not in a position to implement their promise. They actually received 73,494 tons of foodgrains. After a series of conferences and protracted discussions, the following alternative proposals were put to the Bengal Government for consideration: (a) a modified form of free trade within the Eastern Zone based on wagon movements from each province or (b) full free trade within the Eastern Zone and the abrogation of the basic plan with a promise as emergency measure of relief until conditions under the free trade settled down to 45,000 tons of foodgrains within a month. The Government of Bengal chose the second alternative. Early in July, the Government of India called another Food Conference when free trade was buried once for all and substituted by a revised basic plan

based on surpluses admitted by provinces. He added that the Government of India could not supply 45,000 tons of foodgrains in one month as promised under the free trade scheme. As a result of the July Conference, the Government of India informed the Bengal Government that they would receive 4,41,000 tons of foodgrains. The Bengal Government lodged a formal protest which did not produce any result. Sir Nazimuddin claimed that from the time his Ministry took office, they had been continuously impressing on the Government of India not only the serious shortage of foodgrains in Bengal but the alternative need of supplies from outside.

Answering critics who had been demanding as to what happened to the large quantities of foodgrains sent from outside to Bengal, the Chief Minister said that from March 1, to August 31, the total quantity of foodgrains received in Calcutta on Government account including purchases by Government agents from outside Bengal and purchased within the province on Government account amounted to 65,30 lakhs of maunds. Out of this total it was found possible, after meeting the minimum requirements of industrial labour employed in war work, the essential services public utility concerns and the amounts needed for distribution through cheap grain shops in Calcutta and the industrial areas to despatch quantities aggregating to 16,51 lakhs of maunds to mofussil districts mainly for the relief of the areas in greatest distress.

Replying to charges that the Provincial Government had failed to deal with the situation, the Chief Minister said that the charge was without any justification and baseless. As for the assertion that the famine in Bengal proved that it was not possible to have two or more independent Government in India, Sir Nazimuddin said : "The statement of facts narrated by me proves conclusively that a Central Government with autonomous provinces cannot deal with a situation the like of which we have had to face in Bengal. The Central Government has failed and will always fail to induce autonomous provinces to part with surplus food stuff at the expense of their own people. The Ministry and their supporters, both in Orissa and Assam, gave an ultimatum to the Government of India and even the provinces ruled under Section 93, in spite of being directly under the Central Government, practically refused to co-operate with the policy of the Central Government. The question may well be asked what would Bengal have done without food grains from outside and how could Bengal get them if she were an independent zone. Assuming the conditions to be identical, viz., famine and war, an independent Bengal would not have looked for outside assistance or be dictated by the Central Government. She would have relied on herself and formulated either a short-term or a long term policy to meet the situation instead of relying on promises which could not be fulfilled. Moreover, an independent Bengal would have had more effective control over transport particularly, railways and inland river service. Even allowing for the quota fixed for the military, if the railway and river service had been under the control of the Bengal Government, they would have been able to distribute food-stuffs better than they have found it possible to do under the present conditions. In this connection, I may mention that in June and July, allegations were made that foodstuffs sent to Bengal by railway wagons could not be unloaded in time owing to lack of proper arrangements by the Bengal Government. During the visit of the hon. *Sir J. P. Srivastava* it was made clear to him, on the authority of the Regional Food Commissioner, that there was no basis for this complaint. An independent Bengal would have had vastly better financial resources."

"The financial scheme for the provinces under the Government of India Act and the Otto Niemeyer Award," *Sir K. Nazimuddin* continued, "never contemplated the possibility of the province having to incur expenditure on the scale necessary to meet a situation like the one obtaining in Bengal. The Provincial Government had to apply for financial assistance for giving relief to the starving and dying people of Bengal. Before assistance was given, conditions were laid down by the Government of India and after we agreed to comply with those conditions, a limited sum was given to us as interest-bearing loan. We have risked the future of our province and not hesitated to spend money freely for the relief of the distressed, incurring liabilities practically beyond the resources of the province. But, so far, the Central Government have not come forward with any offer of subvention and all that we have been told is : Raise the money yourself and in case you fail, we will find you the money. Independent Bengal would have had its own financial resources to meet a situation like this. I think, one of the reasons why the Muslims are demanding independent Governments for areas where

they are in a majority, is that because of its entire reliance on the Centre for finance. However, autonomous a province may be, its activities can be restricted and almost crushed by financial manipulations. It will thus be seen that the famine in Bengal has shown that situations like the present cannot be tackled by a Central Government and in future no Central or Federal scheme for India can ever hope to meet more successfully a situation like this. It is true that foodgrains are now pouring into Bengal, but it is due to the call of humanitarian sentiments which no people or province can resist in view of the appalling conditions in Bengal. As long as humanitarian sentiments count in the world, such aid will be sent from one province to another, and one independent zone to another independent zone. Even countries far apart on the map of the world and having little common bond between one another, help one another, in distress. The help which Bengal has received from other provinces is no argument against her political separation from certain other parts of India. Those who argue thus lay themselves open to the charge that were Bengal a State in Pakistan, their humanitarian sentiments would have evaporated and they would have refused to help Bengal merely because she was a Muslim State. I myself have a higher opinion of our future neighbours in Hindustan. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the people outside Bengal for the most generous contributions that we have received in kind and cash from all sections of the people—rich and poor alike."

"I would also like to take this opportunity," the Chief Minister said, "of thanking the Viceroy and the military authorities for the steps they have taken for giving immediate relief. Thanks to general Wakely's organisation, we are moving over 2,000 tons from Calcutta into the districts and we may do even better. I also like to acknowledge in public the valuable assistance and the sympathetic co-operation we have received from the Regional Food Commissioner, the hon'ble Mr. Justice Braund. He realised the critical situation in which we were placed and did his utmost to help us to obtain foodgrains from outside."

DISCUSSION ON THE RESOLUTION

Mr. *Abdul Salam* moved the resolution on the food situation. He severely criticised the Central Government for its inaction, which, he claimed, was responsible for the present state of affairs in Bengal and elsewhere. He said that the Government spokesmen had claimed that there had been a bumper crop. He wanted to know what had happened to that crop.

Mr. *Hanif Nizami* (Punjab) moved a rider, which urged the necessity of price control and rationing all over India. He said that the British Parliament had been making political capital out of famine conditions in Bengal and the Opposition parties in Bengal were doing everything in their power to discredit the present Ministry, instead of feeding the starving millions. He asserted that the real culprits were the nawabs, big landlords, zamindars and big traders. These had hidden the foodgrains and were making money out of the misery of poor starving people. The profit-motive had united landholders, Unionists, Leaguers, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Mr. Nizami said that the Muslims of India looked to Mr. Jinnah for guidance and he hoped that the League would adopt such policy as would secure food for everyone.

Sir *Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah* (Sind Premier) supported the plea for price control and rationing. The fact, he said, was that the demand exceeded the supply of foodgrains in India at present and the only remedy open to them was to introduce rationing and have price control. They, in Sind, notwithstanding the instructions of the Central Government, had maintained price control, with the result that there was ample food for everyone. Under price control, provided the controlled prices were not varied every now and then, the cultivator was bound to unhoard his stocks.

Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Parliamentary Secretary, Punjab, opposed both price control and rationing. He said that the Punjab Muslim League, by a resolution passed on November 11, had opposed both price control and rationing.

Mr. Nizami : It was not the Punjab Muslim League but its Working Committee and the decision was not unanimous.

Mr. Jinnah : I do not know of that decision. You should have communicated it to me.

Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, proceeding, blamed the Central Government for the present situation in the country. He quoted figures to show that large quantities of foodgrains had remained on station platforms waiting for transport. He claimed

that the Government of India was wholly incompetent and inefficient and there could be no improvement in the situation as long as the "highly incompetent persons who manned the Government of India remained in office." These persons, he said, did not enjoy anyone's confidence or respect. The remedy lay in the immediate establishment of a National Government which task the British Government should entrust to Mr. Jinnah.

Nawab Ismail Khan moved an amendment to the main resolution, which was rejected by the Council.

Mr. Jinnah renewed his appeal for funds and said that after-care of the famished persons would require large amounts of money.

Mr. *Hassan Ispahani* explained the relief activities of the Bengal Muslim Chamber of Commerce. He said that early in the year, the Chamber started a relief fund which was subsequently augmented by contributions received as a result of the appeal issued by Mr. Jinnah. On November 11, the total amount received in the fund amounted to Rs. 3½ lakhs in cash and Rs. 82,000 in kind. This had enabled them to feed 45,000 persons every day in the province and they hoped to increase this figure to 60,000 persons every day. They had 15 milk canteens for children at which 325 were fed every day. In addition to this, large quantities of standard cloth and blankets had been distributed to deserving persons. They intended to close the fund on December 31.

Working Committee—New Delhi—13th. November 1943

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League met at New Delhi on the 13th. November 1943 at the residence of *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan*. Mr. M. A. Jinnah presided. The Committee by a resolution, offered its whole-hearted and sincere congratulations to its President, Mr. Jinnah, on his providential escape and thanked God for sparing his life to guide and lead the Mussalmans of India.

The Working Committee, having considered the recent correspondence that passed between the late Viceroy, Marquis of *Linchgow*, and the President of the League, Mr. Jinnah, regarding the situation in Kashmir and having heard a deputation of the leaders of the Kashmir Muslim Conference, headed by *Chawdhury Ghulam Abbas*, resolved to authorize its President to take such action as he considers necessary in this connection.

MUSLIM PREMIERS TAKE PART IN DISCUSSION

The Premiers of Bengal, Punjab, Sind and N. W. F. Province and the Presidents of the Provincial Leagues of Bengal, Bombay, United Provinces, Punjab, N. W. F. Province, Delhi, Baluchistan and Central Provinces participated in the discussions of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League in its afternoon session to-day. Mr. M. A. Jinnah presided. The meeting *inter alia* considered the food situation in the country, and adopted a resolution on Palestine. The Committee adjourned till Monday afternoon.

The meeting appointed a committee consisting of Sir *Nazimuddin*, *Nawab Ismail Khan* and *Chawdhury Khaliquzzaman* to examine the constitution that has been framed for the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

PALESTINE QUESTION

The following is the text of the Palestine Resolution adopted by the Working Committee:

"The Working Committee has learnt with alarm and misgivings that Jewish agencies have again started anti-Arab propaganda and are pulling strings in America and England for further immigration of Jews into Palestine to the detriment of the just and legitimate interests of that country. The Working Committee consider it necessary to remind the British Government that the reopening of the immigration question will be directly in conflict with even the policy out-lined in the White Paper and contrary to the solemn pledges given by the ex-Viceroy Lord *Linchgow* in his letter, dated June 22, 1940, to Mr. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, in the following terms: 'Finally, I would invite your attention to the measures so far taken to implement the policy laid down in the White Paper of May 1939, namely, registration of Jewish immigration since April 1939 in accordance with the provisions of the White Paper and the enactment of legislation last February with which you will be familiar from the references in the public Press and which was embodied in the Command Paper 6,180 controlling the transfer of land in the interests of Arab agriculturists. You may rest assured that

every consideration has been and will continue to be given by his Majesty's Government to legitimate Arab claims.

"The Working Committee emphatically warns the British Government that any further injustice done to Palestine Arabs under Jewish or Foreign influences or by a departure from the solemn pledges to the Arabs from time to time which might result in the frustration of their national aspiration for independence will be greatly resented by the Muslims of India."

The Working Committee concluded its session on the 15th. November 1943 after disposing of several questions relating to internal administration of the League. It also fixed the dates of the next annual session of the League, to be held at Karachi.

The Open Session of the League

31st. Session—Karachi—24th. December 1943

Haroonabad (Karachi) was a place of activity to-day when Mr. M. A. Jinnah arrived there to preside over the 31st. Session of the All India Muslim League.

The main event of the day was a unique and spectacular procession nearly two miles long, in which Mr. Jinnah was taken to the pandal to unfurl the League Flag at 7-30 p. m. to the accompaniment of the firing of 31 rockets. Smart formations of Muslim National Guards, dressed in grey uniforms, totalling 2,000 volunteers, Akharas of Muslim physical culturists, Muslim students and Boy Scouts, fifty camels and an equal number of caparisoned horses, all ridden by Hazis in Arab costumes preceded Mr. Jinnah's carriage which was decorated to resemble a boat and was drawn by 31 camels—this figure symbolising the 31st session of the All-India Muslim League.

Speaking from a rostrum to a vast crowd, Mr. Jinnah thanked them for the "royal reception" the people of Karachi had accorded him. He felt the honour all the more because Karachi was his birthplace. It was a fitting tribute the city could pay to the representative of the Muslim nation.

Speaking of the goal of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah said: "If we continue to consolidate ourselves, we are bound to achieve our goal. In our efforts to achieve our goal, Sind has a major part to play. Karachi will be the gateway of Pakistan. Pakistan will include Sind, the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan." Mr. Jinnah declared: "Our flag symbolises our national aspirations and we must keep it aloft."

The unfurling ceremony was preceded by recitations from the 'Qur'an'.

At some points on the route of the procession, people from the balconies of houses showered silver coins on Mr. Jinnah; a Muslim Association presented a purse *en route*.

Welcome Address

Welcoming the delegates to the open session of the League and introducing the term Sindhu as a new synonym for Pakistan—which he defined as the land of the Indus and its tributaries, comprising only Kashmir, N. W. F. Province, the Punjab, Baluchistan and Sind—Mr. G. M. Syed, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in his address, said: "Sindhu wants not only to unite India but the whole world. Only that object cannot be achieved by the methods of those who have closed their eyes to history and hard facts."

Drawing a distinction between Sindhu and Hind, Mr. Syed said that Sindhu had been the meeting place, through the centuries, of many races, civilisations and religions. "In no part of the world," he added, "had the fusion of philosophies and religions taken place in such profusion as in this land. Here have blended the teachings of the Vedanta, the lesson of Buddha and the preaching of Guru Nanak and the great Sufis. They have endeavoured towards religious unity. Untouchability is nowhere less evident than here. In comparison with the influence of Egypt, Iran, Greece, Arabia on this land, the influence of Southern India is almost negligible. Thus the traditions of the people of Sindhu are unique. They have a special message in the drive towards universal brotherhood and for the fulfilment of that mission they are better fitted than most. But some inhabitants of Hind, with a view to bringing about temporary combinations, have been misleading the people of Sindhu". At the same time he accused the non-Muslim inhabitants of Sindhu of showing a lack of national sense as was evidenced by their opposition to the "buy from Muslims" movement. "The non-Muslims of Sindhu are joining hands with the non-Muslims of Hind, and want to make the inhabitants of Sindhu slaves simply because the majority of Sindhu's inhabitants are Muslims.

Under the circumstances, it is the duty of every Muslim of Hind to help us to make our native land free and independent."

Mr. Syed thanked the Muslims of Hind for their efforts so far in furtherance of the Pakistan movement and said: "Now the Sindhu nation has reached the stage when steps for action are necessary". Appealing to well-to-do Muslims of Hind to send capital and sincere workers to make Sindhu independent and economically self-supporting, Mr. Syed said: "In the past you have sent such people as Sayed Brelvi and Ismail Shaheed for the above purposes. Have you no Ahmed and Ismail among you now? Our future is interwoven with your future. Whatever high stations in Hind you may occupy, they will not be permanent without the stability of Sindhu. Your integrity in India will mainly depend upon the stability of our national state."

Mr. Syed concluded by saying that great significance was attached to the present session as it marked the beginning of a new phase in the political history of *Millat*.

Mr. Jinnah's Presidential Address

Speaking in a clear voice in pin-drop silence Mr. Jinnah declared: "As I have repeatedly said any call that comes from you, any opportunity for service, I shall serve with my heart and soul, I shall not falter nor hesitate but obey. Since we undertook the revival and the revitalising of the Muslim League it is now seven years. These have been strenuous years. During these seven years, we have made remarkable progress and it is admitted by our friends, and even by our opponents to-day. We have shown it not merely to India but to the world and we have fully established that we are a nation.

Raising his voice, Mr. Jinnah said: "We shall never rest content until we seize the territories that belong to us and rule over them."

Mr. Jinnah continuing said: "Let me tell you that the struggle is a hard and long one and it requires special patience, it requires every one of you—and now I specially address the youth—patience, hard work and steady progress in building the great nation to which we belong. Every step has to be considered from various points of view before we take one step and the next one. You will admit that so far we have met every manoeuvre, every machination, every moment, every scheme and every design to break us, with success every time.

"We have survived the opposition which first came from the Government and bureaucracy, when we undertook reorganisation of the Muslim League. For reasons of their own, that opposition was slackened. Then came a terrific onslaught from the Congress—mass contact and challenges and when the Congress Ministries were formed the Muslim League was told and ordered to liquidate itself. Elections and bye-elections—Congress, Jamaitis, Uthmas, Ahrars, Azad Conference, Momins—every effort made to destroy the Muslim League, to cause disruption among the Muslims, rebounded upon them as a boomerang. The Muslim League now is a true force. Even to-day we are not left in peace."

Referring to the strength developed by the League during the last seven years Mr. Jinnah said:—

"I most respectfully advise our opponents, the Congress or Hindu leadership or the British Government: You cannot break us. Don't meddle with our affairs. If you want to come to terms with us we are always ready and willing to come to terms with the British Government or the Hindus on honourable terms and not any other terms. Today there is not the slightest doubt that the Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organisation of Muslim India. We have got our flag, our platform and what is more, our definite goal of Pakistan. We have created a complete unity of ideal and thought. Now we must undertake further an organisational machinery—directive, efficient and effective for action.

Mr. Jinnah then dwelt on the scope for a constructive programme and said:—"Muslim India has to-day acquired full consciousness and is taking keenest interest in all that happens around her. Various suggestions such as the setting up of a machinery to chalk out a programme of national industries for Muslim India, national education and the starting of heavy industries in Pakistan have been made.

The task before the League is daily growing and the stage has come when it is absolutely essential that a Committee of Action consisting of not less than five members and not more than seven should be set up to undertake the task of organising, consolidating and unifying the activities of the League.

FOOD PROBLEM

Dealing with the food problem, Mr. Jinnah referred to the conference of Muslim Premiers which he had convened in Delhi in November last. He asserted

that there was entire agreement among the Premiers and it was absolutely untrue to suggest that Lord Wavell took the wind out of the League sail by summoning the League Premiers. The interview with the Viceroy came about only after the Premiers and himself had fully discussed the food problem and desired to meet the Viceroy. He (Mr. Jinnah) had no machinations whatsoever which Lord Wavell had upset. He had made it plain already that so far as the food policy was concerned, the League was willing to do its best in wiping out the scourge of famine and prevent its recurrence anywhere in India. However, Mr. Jinnah asked whether in dealing with the food question, the agriculturists, the producers of food grains, should be bled white to fatten the industrialists, and whether there was going to be one rule of justice for one class and another rule of justice for another class. He was for total control of prices of not only food grains but also of essential articles necessary for the existence of the agriculturists.

ATTITUDE OF HINDUS

Mr. Jinnah asserted that the Hindus were responsible for holding up the progress of the country.

He asked: "Can we Mussalmans of India accept Akhand Hindustan, Hindu Raj over the entire sub-continent? (Cries of "No"). Is it possible to expect Muslim India to agree to Akhand Hindustan and Hindu Raj on the continent? (Cries of "No, No"). This is their proposal. They have not given up their dream. On the other hand, they talk of independence. Whose independence? I have repeatedly warned you that when they talk of independence, they mean the independence of India and slavery of Muslim India ('shame'). Can you achieve Pakistan without independence of India? When we say Pakistan, we mean not our independence only but independence of Hindus also. (Cheers). If the Hindus, owing to their obsession or dream or cursedness put obstruction in the way of the freedom of both and insist upon the freedom of one and the slavery of the other, I ask you who are responsible for holding up the progress of the country except the Hindus?

VICEROY'S APPEAL FOR CO-OPERATION

Mr. Jinnah said that in the political situation the only new thing that had happened was Lord Wavell's appeal for co-operation at Calcutta. Mr. Amery too had made it clear that the principles of the Atlantic Charter were made applicable to India eighteen months before the Atlantic Ocean produced the Atlantic Charter (laughter). "Lord Wavell like a Soldier-Viceroy has spoken in plain language. In that respect, he has made a great contribution to the political problems of India. He is no more embarrassed by his mental bag which he found it necessary to jettison in the Mediterranean before he crossed the Suez Canal. (Laughter). Having put the political issue into cold storage indefinitely, Lord Wavell had said that he was concentrating on winning the war. It is really astonishing that he, representing the Crown and speaking with responsibility and seriousness, thinks that he can win this war while he is totally indifferent to the political situation. What happened when the Lebanon question came? What happened when the Syrian question came? Were all those political adjustments made merely from the humanitarian point of view or the political point of view? What happened when differences took place at Algiers with the French? It is astonishing, it is sheer blindness to say, 'My job is to win the war only'. With all humility I say to the British Government you have got to get the whole-hearted enthusiastic support of some party in this country if not all."

As regards the Viceroy's reference to the economic home front and preparation for peace, Mr. Jinnah said: "How are you going to get all the resources of India's energy and determination if every party is kept at arms length, discontented and dissatisfied." "The Viceroy had said that he would welcome co-operation from anyone or anybody." Mr. Jinnah said this is a flagrant abuse of the English word "co-operation." "What is co-operation? Does it not in plain language mean—that without giving any part or any real share in the authority of Government we are asked to do the work of camp followers, menials and subservients? Can you expect any self-respecting organisation to accept that position? And even if we were so foolish to fall in with this fantastic suggestion, can any intelligent man believe that we can ever succeed in putting real enthusiasm and secure the whole-hearted and genuine support and co-operation of the people? The complacency with which such pronouncement are made is amazing. The British Government are pursuing a definite policy and they do not want the co-operation of any party—does not matter which party it is."

The Congress decided to launch a civil disobedience movement if their demands

were not conceded. The Congress had been out-lawed. "What has the rest of India done that the Government should talk to them in this language? We have offered our hand of co-operation for the job of work that Lord Wavell wants us to do, provided our hand is accepted as that of a confident friend with a real share in the authority of Government and with a definite promise that we shall win our share in the fruit of victory when we win it. That has been rejected. They have outlawed the Congress and I suppose they would like to outlaw the Muslim League also. We are quite ready for it (cheer). But why do you bracket those organisations together? It is not honest. I am of the opinion that this policy that is pursued by the British Government is going to prove disastrous."

VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION OF EMPIRE

Referring to Mr. *Churchill's* statement that he would not preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, Mr. Jinnah said: "I can tell him this. Voluntary liquidation is more honourable than a compulsory one. It will redound to the honour of the British nation and it will be recognised by us as an act of friendship which got its value and assets in the future. But compulsory liquidation will have none of these advantages, and the British Empire will have to be liquidated one day—whether you like it or not."

Continuing, Mr. Jinnah referred to the speech made by *John Bright* in the House of Commons on the India Bill in 1858 and said: "We are now impressing upon the successors of that great British statesman that the only honest way for Great Britain is to divide and quit. Unity can only be on the basis of division of property and possession to the respective two nations, the Hindus and the Muslims. The other minorities will be the acid test. It will be the sacred solemn duty of Pakistan and Hindustan to safeguard and protect and give a fair and just deal to the minorities under these two zones."

CRITICISM OF CONGRESS POLICY

Referring to the Congress, Mr. Jinnah said that after their threats of mass contact etc. had failed their methods have changed. Their methods now are subtle, insidious and intended to play underground and undermine.

"I see no change except a parrot-like cry," he said. "The cleverest party that is carrying on propaganda are the Communists. They have so many flags—the Red flag, the Soviet flag, the Congress flag and now they have been good enough to introduce the League flag also. They shout that they want Congress-League settlement. Who says no? But the question is on what basis?"

Mr. Jinnah went over the history of the August Resolution of the Congress and said that from Mr. *Gandhi's* letter of January 19, 1943 to Lord *Linlithgow*, it was clear that he stuck to his guns, namely, the August Resolution. It was a definite deliberate attempt to by-pass the Muslim League and force the hands of the British Government to surrender to the Hindus.

"Has there been any change since January 1943," asked Mr. Jinnah. "Millions of Congress men are outside the jails. Now, they are contemplating a form of government based on the culture and on the system prevailing in the historic period of Vikramaditya. How then could any fair-minded person expect the Muslims to accept that position?"

Mr. Jinnah then referred to "a few isolated Hindu leaders who were showing some sort of sympathy for our point of view," and said: "They however fight shy of using the word Pakistan and prefer the phraseology of 'self-determination.' When they do so they talk with their tongue in their cheeks.

"We are told that we are non-co-operating with the Congress," Mr. Jinnah said. "It was the Congress that non-co-operated with the League. The Congress took up the attitude to dominate and to assume by hook or by crook the reins of Government as Hindu Raj and Hindu Government. We are defending ourselves against that monstrosity and those machinations."

Mr. Jinnah added: "We are not told what impossible demand we are making. But we are told that the Hindus will begin to prefer to make the best of things as they stand at present rather than agree to what they honestly deem to be our unreasonable demands. So rather than agree to our unreasonable demands, the Hindus will and are ready to accept the British Raj.

"Then we are told that our indifference to the goal of independence would lead the Muslim youths to rebel against the League. Is not this untruthful? Is it not slighting the Muslim youth that their elder politicians are indifferent to the goal of independence? Let me tell you that this is vicious, sinister and wicked propaganda to incite the Muslim youth against the League.

"There is no truth whatsoever in the suggestion that we are reconciled to the British Raj. On the contrary, we are told by Mr. *Rajagopalachari* in his pamphlets "The Way Out" that signs are, indeed, not wanting that the Hindus are willing to accept the British Raj rather than come to a settlement with us."

Two things were essential and no time should be lost in bringing them into being, said Mr. Jinnah, unfolding the constructive programme which he intended to place before the League. The two things were a Committee of Action with its own secretariat to establish a Bureau of National Industries in Pakistan and a Parliamentary Board with final powers in respect of elections.

In regard to the first suggestion, Mr. Jinnah said heavy industries must be established especially in Pakistan. A national system of Muslim education must also be planned. The Committee of Action which would achieve these purposes must consist of not less than five and not more than seven persons. The Committee would organise and co-ordinate an All-India policy in this respect and examine all proposals and suggestions received by them. This Committee must have a regular secretariat. As regards the All-India Parliamentary Board, it was necessary because at present there was no detached body to whom election disputes could be confidently referred by claimants for League tickets. The Parliamentary Board would be a sort of final court of appeal in such cases. The stage had come, Mr. Jinnah concluded, to put more vigour into the All India Muslim League.

Referring to the food situation, Mr. Jinnah gave a resume of the events in November when he had called a meeting of the five Muslim League Premiers at Delhi. It was untrue, he said, as a certain section of the Press had suggested, that Lord Wavell took the wind out of our sails by calling these Premiers to a conference at the Viceroy's House. It was we who suggested after full discussion between ourselves that the Viceroy should meet the Premiers and discuss the question with them. It was false to say that Lord Wavell upset "my machinations" because there were no machinations. We were willing and ready to do everything in our power to avert the scourge of famine and prevent its recurrence anywhere in India. It was false to say that the Premiers were actuated by any vested interests. It was not that we did not recognise the efficacy of rationing, price control, procurement and a uniform policy. The real issue was why should the agriculturists labour to fatten the Industrialists?

Dealing with the work of consolidation already achieved by the League in the Provinces, Mr. Jinnah said the League was now shock-proof and stunt-proof. They had made a beginning, however small, by having five League Ministers in the five Provinces in which Muslims were in a majority. These Ministers were functioning not because they wanted to provide jobs for their Ministers, but because the League was behind them. Whatever power the Ministers possessed had been seized by the League. It was only power that would contribute to the organisation of the people. With such power as they possessed, these League Ministers could, if they chose, galvanise and unify the Muslim League into a living force in their provinces. They could take at least ameliorative and constructive measures in the educational, rural and economic fields. Mr. Jinnah likened the League Ministers to laboratories and said, "Let us see what emerges from these laboratories."

Second Day—Karachi—25th. December 1943

RESOLUTION ON PAKISTAN

The second day of the open session of the All-India Muslim League commenced at 10 o'clock to-night. The hon. Sir K. Nazimuddin, Premier of Bengal, who arrived in Karachi this evening, was seen seated on the dais.

Chaudhuri Khaliquzzaman moved the following resolution :

"Whereas the All-India Muslim League in its annual session held at Delhi in April 1943 had, in view of the vague, indefinite and unsettled policy of British Government towards the Muslim demands of Pakistan on the one hand and the unpatriotic, short sighted and antagonistic attitude of the Hindus on the other, resolved to rely on the untiring efforts, grim determination and willing sacrifices of the Muslims of India generally and the Muslims of Pakistan zones in particular for the attainment of their cherished goal, this session of the All India Muslim League hereby resolves to appoint a Committee of Action of not less than five and not more than seven members to be nominated by the President to prepare and organise the Muslims all over India to meet all contingencies, resist the imposition of an All-India Federation or any other constitution for one United India, and prepare them for the coming struggle for the achievement of Pakistan."

The mover expressed the determination of the Muslims of India to attain their

objective of Pakistan at all costs. He pointed out the instance of the Lebanon, a small country with a small population which had been allowed to enjoy freedom. The proposed State of Pakistan with its huge territory and large population could hold its own. He deplored the attitude of the Hindus in their opposition to the just demand of the Muslims. Their attitude kept both the nations under British tutelage.

The proposed Committee of Action, Mr. *Khaliquzzaman* said, would undertake the task for achieving Pakistan and he assured them that it would not be a committee of words. In conclusion, he said the minorities in Pakistan would get a fair deal and their legitimate interests protected.

The hon. *Sardar Aurangzeb Khan*, Premier, North-West Frontier Province, seconding the resolution, said that Pakistan was there very life and without it. Muslims would be slaves. He denied that the Muslims were retarding the progress of the freedom of India, but the freedom for which Hindus were fighting was aimed at ultimate domination over Muslims.

Sardar Aurangzeb continued : "I am prepared to fight for the freedom of India if the Hindus promise me self-determination in the six provinces in which we are in power." "We are prepared to fight side by side with them only when they guarantee our freedom," he added.

The Frontier Premier then referred to the war and said that if the British Government were sincere in their profession that they were fighting for democracy they must do justice to Muslim India. If they were not able to unify their own Europe, all the powers of which owed allegiance to the same religion, *Sardar Aurangzeb* asked, how did they expect two different nations—Hindus considering the Muslims as untouchable—to come together ? "Sweden and Norway stand together on the map of Europe, but we are two separate countries. Taking these views into account, the Muslims in the areas in which they are in a majority have a right as a free and independent nation."

Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, proceeding, said that there was a limit to patience. Many promises by the British Government remained unfulfilled, but now conditions were different. If possession was nine points of law the Muslim League, he said, had already captured and was ruling over the provinces which came into the scheme of Pakistan. The Frontier Premier added that the Muslims were not only fair and just to the minorities but they had been generous to them. In Pakistan the conditions of the minorities would be such as to attract even the Hindus from Hindu India to come and live in Pakistan.

Concluding, he said : "The day of reckoning is coming and when the call comes from Mr. Jinnah to us to get out and fight for Pakistan, we shall not falter. If we want Pakistan, we should not rely upon the British Government or the Hindus, but we should rely upon our inherent strength and obey the orders of Quaid-e-Azam."

Khan Bahadur Sheikh Karamat Ali, M. L. A. (Punjab), supporting the resolution, declared that the issue of Pakistan had been before the public for a long time now and the Hindu community should realise that Pakistan meant their freedom also. He urged the Muslims to be prepared to make any sacrifice for the attainment of Pakistan.

Mr. *Abdur Rah Nashtar* (N. W. F. P.) said the Committee of Action would build and increase the inherent strength of the Muslims.

He added that the days of negotiations and petitioning had gone and the Muslims should be prepared to make any sacrifice that might be required for achieving their goal. He warned the Hindus "not to fall into the trap of an all-India Federation" which, he asserted, would only mean the continued subjection of both the communities.

The House passed the resolution unanimously.

COMMITTEE TO PREPARE FIVE-YEAR PROGRAMME

Mr. *Z. A. Lari* (U.P.) moved the following resolution :

"Whereas, as the first step towards consolidating the strength of the Muslims of Pakistan areas and preparing them for the heavy and onerous responsibilities inherent in the status of an independent sovereign State, the All-India Muslim League has, with the support and co-operation of the Muslims succeeded in establishing its governments in all the Pakistan Provinces, which has naturally opened up vast opportunities to the Assemblies and Cabinets for service to their people in the provincial sphere of activities like education, agriculture, irrigation, providing with facilities for labour, economic holdings and fair rent for tenants, etc., and whereas

it is acutely realised that neither the people nor the Provincial States, which have for long been denied opportunities for a fair and natural development due to historical, political and, in some instances, communal considerations, will be able to ameliorate their lot to any appreciable degree or effectively function as a State without a gigantic and co-ordinated drive in the field of economic reconstruction and State industrialisation, this session of the All-India Muslim League hereby authorises the President to appoint a committee with power to prepare a comprehensive scheme for five years' programme for the economic and social uplift. State industrialisation in Pakistan zones, for the introduction of free primary basic education, reform of land system, stabilisation of rent, security of tenure, improvement in the condition of labour and agriculture and control of money-lending. The committee shall submit its report as early as possible and an interim report not later than June 1944 to the Working Committee for necessary action thereon."

Mr. Lari hoped that the Committee to be appointed would go through the various questions relating to the uplift of the Muslims and make suitable recommendations.

The hon. Mr. *Tamizudin*, Education Minister, Bengal, seconding the resolution, said that nowhere in the world was the standard of living so low as in India and none could bring about a millennium by merely preparing a comprehensive plan. The remedy was obvious and unless and until the people were able to remove the political subjugation, there could be no economic progress. There was no short cut to the desired millennium and their first duty therefore was to win independence and Pakistan simultaneously.

Continuing, Mr. *Tamizuddin* said that if the Hindus really wanted to have independence for India, they should join hands with the Muslim League. If they were not prepared to do so, one could conclude that it was the Hindus who were standing in the way of the independence of the country.

The Bengal Minister then referred to the new world conditions that might emerge after the war was won and the need for a comprehensive economic and social plan. It was therefore quite opportune that a committee should at once undertake the task of planning ahead and draw up schemes for the future. Secondly, the promotion of literacy was of prime importance in any scheme of improvement. The Minister said: "The essential necessity is the removal of illiteracy. We shall not be able to do much without funds.

The essential industries should be run by the State and there should be complete industrialisation of the country. We shall not be able to create conditions under which the State can own all the essential industries unless we are able to get our independence. Money can come from the same source from which it came in Soviet Russia."

He hoped that the committee that would be appointed would be able to draw up plans which could be given effect to at least certainly in a free India.

Mr. *Hamid Nizamani* supported the resolution. He said that the resolution sought to make the Muslims self-sufficient and they would not have to rely for anything on Hindu India.

Mr. *Jinnah* himself next commended the resolution. He said that the responsibility of selecting the personnel of the committee was his. His experience of such committees in the past, said Mr. *Jinnah*, had been that people came forward merely for the sake of publicity. After their appointment they hardly did any work. He would not undertake a committee under such conditions. He asked the members of the League to come forward who were prepared to carry out strenuous tasks—men confident, capable and fully devoted to the task entrusted to them. The report, added Mr. *Jinnah*, should be submitted to the Working Committee within six months and members should be prepared to devote their whole time to their work. He would choose the personnel of the Committee from the names received by him.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

"SATYARTH PRAKASH"

Prof. *Malik Inayatullah Khan* of Lahore moved next the following resolution: "This session of the All-India Muslim League invites the attention of the Central Government as well as of the Provincial Government to those chapters of late Swami Dayanand's book "Satyarth Prakash", which contain objectionable, insulting and provocative remarks against the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on Him) and other founders of the religion and emphatically demand that the said Governments proscribe these chapters and also prosecute the publishers of these chapters under the relevant section of the I. P. C. with a view to securing effective prevention for the publication of such literature."

In moving the above resolution. Prof. Malik Inayatullah said that, since the beginning of Islam, Muslims had never made offensive remarks against any religion. It was a pity that at a time when everyone wanted to respect other people's religious susceptibilities, those chapters in "Satyarth Prakash" were allowed to remain untouched, Muslims had no objection to those chapters in "Satyarth Prakash" which defined the religious precepts of the Arya Samaj. But they could not tolerate any further the continuance in the book of chapters 12, 13 and 14, which were condemned by Muslims all over India.

At this stage, the speaker wished to quote certain passages from the chapters in question, whereupon Mr. Jinnah got up and said : "These passages are so objectionable that I do not want any publicity to be given to them."

Haji Ali Akbar Shah of Hyderabad (Sind), seconding the resolution, said he was glad that the agitation against the "Satyarth Prakash" first began in Hyderabad (Sind). He insisted that all copies of the book should be seized by the Government of India.

Mulana Abdul Hamid said that even *Mahatma Gandhi* had written in *Young India* that, so long as "Satyarth Prakash" was extant, there could be no communal unity in India. Muslims, he said, were prepared to make any sacrifice to see that the objectionable chapters were proscribed.

The resolution was passed unanimously. The House then adjourned to meet again on the next morning.

Third Day—Karachi—26th. December 1943

EFFECTIVE PRICE CONTROL

The session of the Muslim League terminated this afternoon after all the six resolutions adopted by the Subjects Committee were passed unanimously without a single amendment being moved. The conference dispersed amidst shouts of "Jinnah Zindabad", "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Muslim League Zindabad."

The hon. Mr. *Hussain Imam* moved a resolution demanding immediate, comprehensive and effective price control on necessities of life and to ration essential commodities. Mr. Hussain Imam criticised the Government of India for not taking effective steps to prevent profiteering, hoarding and to arrange for the proper distribution of foodgrains. Inflation was largely responsible for the present distress and he urged the authorities to take effective steps to rescue poor people who had been affected adversely. By passing this resolution, he said, the League would be standing by, and fulfilling its duties to the masses.

A spirited defence of the Sind Ministry's food policy was put forward by *Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah*, Premier of Sind, who seconded the resolution. He particularly resented the charge that the Sind Government were out to win their favour at the expense of the vast majority of producers and consumers. He said that exactly the opposite was the case. Our critics seemed to forget that the Sind Government had the courage to turn down the Government of India's open invitation to drop price control which was tantamount to giving a free hand to exploit and make money at the expense of the consumer. If the Sind Government had done so, then truly they could have been accused of Zamindari domination, but actually they had made sacrifices, such sacrifices that they deserved well of the country.

"I am proud of my Ministry", said *Sir Ghulam Hussain*, and added that when *Lord Wavell* came to Karachi, he told the Viceroy that if Mr. *Amery* found fault with the Provincial Governments then he, *Sir Ghulam Hussain*, would have to reply to Mr. *Amery*.

Explaining how the measures proposed by the Sind Government were intended to benefit the cultivators and consumers and not the 400 or so zamindars, *Sir Ghulam Hussain* pointed out that in Sind the landless cultivator got 50 per cent of the produce to himself. Therefore, he stood to benefit from any rise in the price of grain but the condition precedent was that crop should not pass out of his hands. That was the crux of the situation. The cultivator could not hold on to his crop for long. "I am telling the cultivators," said *Sir Ghulam Hussain*, "do not sell before I return from Delhi." *Sir Ghulam Hussain* said that the cultivators in previous years had suffered greatly due to low prices of produce and now when they were asking for a little more an outcry was being raised. It was but fair that the cultivators should get relief.

BENGAL'S PLIGHT

Sir Nazimuddin, who supported the resolution, sincerely thanked the military and the whole country for the great help and practical sympathy they had shown

to Bengal in her hour of trial. He said the Muslim League Ministries had always worked for the masses and not for the rich. While the Ministries wanted to control the price of agricultural produce, the control of the necessities of life must go hand in hand. The Ministries had been falsely accused of ignoring the interests of the masses or of procrastination. Actually speaking, it was the Government of India that had so far been the supporters and protectors of vested interests.

Dealing with the *aman* crop in Bengal, Sir Nazimuddin said it was essential to get hold of the *aman* crop in order to meet the situation better. But the Central Government was advocating a policy which might frustrate the object of getting hold of the *aman* crop in Bengal this year. The Bengal Government might have gone on with their scheme in this connection but objections were raised by a member of the Government of India only a few days ago. If those objections were not quickly withdrawn, there might be great difficulty in the procurement of the *aman* crop, Sir Nazimuddin warned.

The Bengal Premier then painted a grave picture of the conditions in rural Bengal. Although famine was being overcome the situation from the point of view of clothing and health was giving cause for anxiety. In many villages as much as 60 per cent of the population had been stricken down by malaria which was of a most virulent type. The lack of quinine and paucity of doctors added to the complexity of the problem. The Bengal Premier appealed to doctors in all parts of the country to come forward to serve the people of Bengal. No less than 350 more doctors were needed. His province would give good salaries and conditions of service. Dealing with the financial side of relief, Sir Nazimuddin said that the situation with which Bengal was faced was an extraordinary one. Her distress was undoubtedly due to war conditions. The financial burden of relief should, therefore, be borne by the British Government and the Government of India and it would be unfair to saddle the Provincial Government with it. There was a tremendous task ahead and a colossal amount would be needed for the rehabilitation of the stricken districts. The urgent need now was not food but medicines, clothing and blankets. Sir Nazimuddin took the opportunity to issue an emphatical denial of the statement issued by Mr. Savarkar that conversions of starving Hindus had taken place. There was not an iota of truth in Mr. Savarkar's statement, said Sir Nazimuddin, and added that neither Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee nor any Hindu Sabha leader had mentioned such a thing to him either directly or indirectly. It was extraordinary, Sir Nazimuddin concluded, that a responsible leader of a section of the Hindus should give currency to such a baseless charge.

After Mr. Abdul Matin Chowdhury also supported the resolution it was passed unanimously.

DEMAND FOR FRESH ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATURES

The need for holding fresh elections to the Provincial and Central Legislatures was stressed by Qazi Mohammad Isa who moved a resolution on the subject. Mr. Isa said that the only reason for the postponement of the elections in India was to continue Section 93 rule. War conditions, he said, had not stood in the way of holding elections in Canada, South Africa, Australia and in other parts of the Dominions. In any general or by-elections that might be held in this country, Mr. Isa said, the Muslim League was bound to have an overwhelming success.

Mr. Yahya Bakhtayar, Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan and Mr. Shaik Abdul Salam who supported the resolution, asked why other parties in the country should be penalised for the mistakes of the Congress. They asserted that only a fresh election could correctly reflect the opinion of Muslim India which stood solidly for Pakistan.

The House also passed a resolution urging on the Allied Powers that the territories recently released from the control of Italy—Cyrenacia, Libya and Tripoli—would not be handed back to Italy but would be constituted into independent sovereign States.

On the motion of the hon. Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan and the Raja of Mahmudabad were unanimously elected Honorary General Secretary and Treasurer of the All-India Muslim League for the ensuing year.

In putting the proposition to vote, Mr. M. A. Jinnah described Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan as "my right hand." The Nawabzada had "worked and slaved" day and night and none could possibly have an idea of the great burden he shouldered. The Nawabzada, Mr. Jinnah continued, commanded the universal respect and confidence of the Muslims. Though a Nawabzada, he was a thorough proletarian and he hoped other Nawabs in the country would follow his example. Mr. Jinnah paid a tribute to the General Secretary for the services he had rendered

to the League during the last seven years and wished him a long life of service to the community.

MR. JINNAH'S CONCLUDING SPEECH

Winding up the proceedings of the session, Mr. Jinnah expressed his satisfaction at the magnificent success of the meeting. He paid a tribute to Mr. *Yusuf Haroon*, the General Secretary, and Mr. *G. M. Syed*, Chairman of the Reception Committee respectively, and to the other members and workers of the Committee for their untiring efforts which had made the session a great success.

Mr. Jinnah cordially thanked the delegates for the great success of the session. Both in the presidential procession and inside the pandal, he saw Muslims of every section, Khojas, Memons, Bhoras, Pathans, in fact, of every class and it showed clearly that Muslims were united. What was it that kept the Muslims united as one man and what was the bedrock and sheet-anchor of the community? asked Mr. Jinnah.

"It is Islam he said and added : "It is the great book Quran that is the sheet-anchor of Muslim India. I am sure that as we go on and on, there will be more and more of oneness—one God, one book, one prophet, and one nation."

Mr. *Yusuf Haroon*, on behalf of the Reception Committee, thanked the various workers and organisations that helped the holding of the session successfully in Karachi.

Fourth Day—Karachi—27th. December 1943

COMMITTEE OF ACTION APPOINTED

A Committee of Action of six members was appointed by the President of the All-India Muslim League, Mr. *M. A. Jinnah*, at Karachi on the 27th. December 1943 in terms of the main resolution passed at the session just concluded.

The personnel of the Committee was as follows : *Nawab Ismail Khan* (Chairman) : Mr. *G. M. Syed*, *Haji Sattar Essack Sait*, *Nawab Iftakar Hussain Khan of Mamdot*, *Kazi Mohamud Isa*, and *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan* (Convener).

Mr. Jinnah's announcement to the Working Committee regarding appointment of the Committee of Action reads :

"In pursuance of Resolution No. 1 passed by the All India Muslim League Session held at Karachi on December 25, 1943, I appoint a Committee till the next Annual Sessions to undertake immediately the work of organising, co-ordinating and unifying the Provincial League and the entire Muslim League organisation in consonance with the constitution, rules and programme of the All-India Muslim League."

Mr. Jinnah announced that the following powers have been delegated to the Committee as authorised by the League Constitution : To appoint or institute Sub-Committees for carrying out such duties and functions as may be entrusted to them ; to control, direct and regulate all the activities of the various Provincial Leagues, strictly in consonance with the aims, objects and rules of the All-India Muslim League ; to take disciplinary action against any member of the League who violates the decisions of the League or acts in contravention of its aims and objects to a right of appeal to the Council of the All-India Muslim League ; to suspend, di-solve or disaffiliate any Provincial League which fails in its duties, infringes or ignores the decisions or directions of the higher bodies and to take disciplinary action against any office-bearer of a Provincial League who fails in his duties or ignores the decisions or directions of the Working Committee or hinders the progress of the League in any manner whatsoever, subject to right of appeal."

PARLIAMENTARY BOARD

The Working Committee of the Muslim League which met this morning at the residence of Mr. *Yusuf Haroon* appointed a Parliamentary Board of three members in pursuance of the suggestion made by Mr. Jinnah in his presidential address. The members of the Committee were : *Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan* ; *Chaudhuri Khaliquzzaman* ; and the hon. Mr. *Hossain Imam*.

After Mr. Jinnah, who presided over the meeting, had announced the appointment of the Committee of Action, the Working Committee resolved that, in view of the appointment of that Committee, it was not necessary to constitute a separate All-India Civil Defence Committee as its functions will also be exercised by the Committee of Action.

The All India Ahrar Conference

Special Session—Lahore—4th. & 5th, December 1943

Proceedings & Resolutions

The special session of the All-India Majlis-i-Ahrar Conference opened at Lahore on the 4th December 1943.

The conference was held in a big 'Shamianna' in the lawns outside Delhi Gate. Thousands of Mussalmans were present and among those who participated were a large number of delegates from different parts of the country. *Hafiz Ali Bahadur Khan*, M. L. A. (Bombay) inaugurated the conference.

While inaugurating the Conference he said that the form of Government ordained by Quran, which he described as *Hakumat-Elahia* (the Kingdom of God) was the most suitable form of Government. That Government would be the most democratic form of Government under which justice would be done, both to the Muslims as well as to the non-Muslims.

The chairman of the Reception Committee, *Maulana Mohd. Ali*, referred to certain grievances of the Mussalmans of Kalabag and the alleged maltreatment being accorded to them.

Syed Attaullah Shah Bukhari presided over the Conference and spoke for about 2 hours. He concluded his speech at 3 A. M.

"What is there of Islam in you? Do you have faith in the holy Quran? Are you prepared to live the life ordained by the holy Quran?" These were some of the questions addressed by *Hazrat Maulana Attaullah Shah Bukhari* to Mr. *Mohammad Ali Jinnah* who claimed to be the "Imam Azam" of the Mussalmans, in the course of his last speech at the special session of the All-India Majlis-i-Ahrar Conference which concluded here early in the morning of 6th. December. The final session commenced at about 9-30 p. m. and concluded at 4 a. m. when the President of the Conference, *Syed Attaullah Shah Bukhari* finished his speech before a gathering which he kept spell-bound.

Syed Attaullah Shah as also *Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar*, M. L. A. in the course of their lengthy speeches pleaded that the form of Government ordained by the holy Quran was the most suitable form of Government. That form was described by the two speakers as "*Hukumat Illahia*."

The cry of Pakistan was described by both the speakers as a big hoax and both of them expressed their opposition to it because they maintained that the present leader of that movement did not know his own mind. Without telling the geography of the land which one wanted to possess no one could be owner of any land. Pakistan was described by the speakers as a vote-catching device.

Maulana Mazhar Ali said: "The Pakistan demand, which has as its background the theory of treating a section of the people as hostages can never be acceptable." "Did not Mr. Jinnah say," asked *Maulana Mazhar Ali*, "that if Muslims in the Hindu majority province were maltreated, the Hindus living in the Pakistan area would be maltreated similarly? "This is the type of justice Mr. Jinnah offers to others and then asks them to agree to his proposal of Pakistan."

Proceeding *Maulana Mazhar Ali* said: "Under *Hukumat Illahia*, the form of government ordained by the Quran—no injustice will be done to anyone and all including the Non-Muslims will be treated fairly and justly."

Maulana Mazhar Ali in the course of his speech referring to the activities of the Communists said that the slogan of Congress-League settlement was "a farce started by the Communists Party to deceive the people and remain in the public eye." *Maulana Mazhar Ali* had no hesitation in saying that the demand for the release of *Mahatma Gandhi* made by the Communists was neither sincere nor genuine. It was "a cloak to cover their sins." There could possibly be no settlement between the Congress and the League. If Communists were really anxious for a Congress League settlement they should instead of wasting breath in raising empty slogans do some constructive work by having a settlement between the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and others who were all free and then take that formula for settlement to *Mahatma Gandhi* for acceptance. He felt sure that *Mahatma Gandhi* would accept it.

Maulana Attaullah Shah Bukhari asserted that the holy Quran had enjoined absolute non-interference in other religions and had called upon Muslims to respect the Prophets and founders of all religions.

Appeal was made for the Bengal Relief Fund by Maulana Attaullah Shah Bukhari and Maulana Mazhar Ali as also by Mr. *Jehangir Kabir* who thanked the Punjab and other provinces for the help rendered to the distressed people of Bengal.

A resolution was passed strongly protesting against the alleged ill-treatment of the Mussalmans of Kalabag by the Nawab of Kalabag.

The All India Muslim Majlis Manifesto

"It is to foster the cause of essential unity of India that the Muslim Majlis has come into being on mature deliberation of the Mussalmans, who have in their heart of hearts the interest of the Muslim community. They have joined their hands under the banner of the Muslim Majlis to declare unequivocally that they will ultimately succeed in the cause they have espoused both for the national and communal good. It is a mission of community service, it is a cause of national regeneration."

Thus stated a manifesto issued by the Muslim Majlis at Calcutta on the 30th. July 1943. explaining the basic and fundamental principle on which it had been established, with *Khan Bahadur Sheikh Mohammad Jan*, M. L. C., Bengal, as President. The manifesto adds :

"The present all round frustration of our national and economic life points out clearly the interdependence of the Hindu-Muslim problems, which have been made vexatious and almost insurmountable by the political opportunists in India. The attempt to create geographical barrier has been a gigantic political blunder on the part of its propounders. While the whole world is improving upon the most advanced ideas of political solidarity, enslaved India is being compelled to commit suicide in the name of Pakistan.

"It is no use suppressing the fact that the majority of the Muslims in India have been living a deplorable life of stagnation since the fall of their Empire. Their mental degradation is mainly responsible for their backwardness in politics. The Muslim leaders have always thought more of themselves and the common Muslims have all along been exploited. The self-styled leaders made them constantly feel that they had been deprived of their legitimate rights and privileges by the Hindus. But they were never induced to aspire for the freedom of their country.

"After the Great World War, when the mighty problems relating to the desecration of the Holy Islamic places and the 'Khilafat' question stepped into the politics of the Muslim India, the selfish and reactionary leaders lost control of the Muslim masses for a period. But this period of mass awakening was not allowed to live long. The reactionary leaders slowly and stealthily again caught hold of a larger number of Muslims in their grip.

"Mr. Jinnah's leadership of the Muslim League is one of the numerous links of the reactionary chain of the selfish and self-styled leaders. He is, indeed, one of those leaders who have blocked the way to the goal of freedom and national unity. As long as such leaders are allowed to reign supreme there is no chance of any compromise among the two great communities in India, and there is no chance of attaining freedom of the country. This reactionary leadership is a powerful weapon in the hands of the British Government to resist the aspiration of 400 million people in their struggle for freedom. We must make an end of reactionary leadership to save our community from its baneful effects.

"Mr. Jinnah is now and then haughtily insisting that all his demands must be accepted verbatim by the Hindus, but he does not like to explain and clarify the issue underlying this absurd and ridiculous demand. Hence the first and most important duty of every well-wisher of the Muslims is to disentangle the Muslim community from the clutches of reactionary leadership, and to lead them on the straight path of freedom. The community should be trained and disciplined in such a way that it may get all its political, economic, social and religious rights on the one hand, and on the other it may work jointly with other communities for the attainment of the country's freedom.

"This is the basic and fundamental principle on which has been established the 'Muslim Majlis'. The Muslims are invited to join this organisation in a body for the welfare of their community, for the good of their country and for working up a glorious future that awaits them. We must not forget that we are destined to play an important part in India's struggle for independence."

The Sikh Conferences

The Anti-Azad Punjab Conference

Azad Punjab Scheme Condemned

That the Sikhs of this ilaqa are prepared to sacrifice every thing to put an end to this nefarious scheme of partition of the Punjab was evident from the demonstrations held on the occasion of the Anti-Azad Punjab Conference held at Panja Sahib on the 16th. August 1943 under the chairmanship of *Baba Kharak Singh*, veteran Sikh leader. Besides the president-elect, *Sardars Sant Singh, M. L. A. (Central), Amar Singh, Harbans Singh Sestani, Labh Singh Narang, Maher Singh Chakwal, Durlabh Singh*, Secretary, Progressive Akali Party and several other prominent Sikhs of the ilaqa attended the conference. *Bakshi Rachpal Singh*, Advocate, Rawalpindi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the leaders and Sikh public to the historic conference.

In the course of his presidential address *Baba Kharak Singh* unequivocally condemned the Azad Punjab scheme and made a passionate plea for united India and equal and honourable partnership for all communities in the administration of the motherland. He added that Mr. Jinnah and Master Tara Singh were sailing in the same boat as agents of British Imperialism. He advocated stronger ties between Hindus and Sikhs.

A resolution characterising the Azad Punjab scheme as suicidal to the country, the Sikh Panth and detrimental to the interests of the entire province was unanimously adopted. The resolution further added that in view of this scheme no powerful Central Government would be possible. The conference, therefore, totally rejected the Pakistan and Azad Punjab schemes and added that Sikhs would make every possible sacrifice to achieve the object of Indian unity.

This resolution was proposed by *Sardar Amar Singh* of Sher-i-Panjab, who in the course of his speech proved by facts and figures that the scheme would lead the country to ruin.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

The Attock Akali Conference

The Attock District Akali Conference was held at Bardari Gurdwara hall on the 16th. August 1943, under the chairmanship of *Sardar Haram Singh*, Advocate. Lahore. Master Tara Singh, Gyani Sher Singh, Gyani Kartar Singh, M. L. A., Principal Ganga Singh and others attended the conference. The President of the Conference was taken out in a procession. *Bakshi Gurcharan Singh*, Advocate Rawalpindi and the Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered his welcome address which dwelt on the Sikh history and the part played by the Gurus.

Sardar Haram Singh, Advocate in the course of his presidential address dwelt at considerable length on the Sikander-Balvev Singh Pact, Azad Punjab Scheme and Hindu Sikh relations.

Principal Ganga Singh who moved the only resolution in favour of Azad Punjab scheme in the course of his speech hardly alluded to the merits of the scheme, but delivered a tirade against the Hindus in general and the Ary Samajists in particular and the Hindu press. He attacked the opponents of the scheme vehemently and remained beating about the bush. The resolution ran as follows. "Resolved that the Azad Punjab scheme sponsored by the Sharomani Akali Dal is in the best interests of the community and further calculated to advance the cause in this part of the Punjab. The conference requests the Central Sikh League and the Sharomani Akali Dal to take special measures completely to safeguard the interests of this ilaqa."

The resolution being put to the vote was carried by a majority. Certain section of the audience raised their hands against the motion.

Another resolution expressing deep concern on the food situation in the country leading to restlessness and demanding the establishment of National Government in the country moved by *Sardar Ajit Singh Sahni*, Quetta externee, was also carried.

The Dhundial Sikh Conference

Master Tara Singh presided over a Sikh Conference held at Dhundial on the 3rd and 4th. October 1943. In his presidential address he emphasised the need of Hindu-Sikh unity. He said :—

"The politics of our country appear to have become completely muddled. The only Congress Committee which functions is the N. W. F. Provincial Congress Committee. The leaders of this Congress Committee are reported in the press to have openly advocated Pakistan during their recent election campaign. *Rai Bahadur Meher Chand Khanna*, while retaining his title has become Secretary of the Congress Party by securing direct commission, though he has never before been a four anna member even. The Hindu press never said a word against Rai Bahadur Meher Chand for betraying the Hindu Maha Sabha, or against the Congress Committee for betraying the Congress principle. The Rai Bahadur has become a super-nationalist though he is still a Rai Bahadur. The Frontier Congress leaders remained torch-bearers of nationalism though they do not believe in one nation (for they want Pakistan). My little brain is incapable of comprehending this resourcefulness.

Look at the false calumnious and mischievous propaganda carried on by the Hindu press regarding Sikh attitude towards the use of beef. It is true that a Sikh's letter was published in a paper in which it was said that all sorts of meat is the same, but the writer was of opinion that all sorts of meat was prohibited in the Sikh religion. Still in my opinion the writing was objectionable. I had gone to my village to take rest for a while. So I did not come to know of such a publication for some days. But as soon as I had opportunity to read the paper, I forcefully condemned the paper in which it was published. But the controversy continues and these mischievous papers impute to me the opinion I repeatedly condemned.

In the Punjab the Sikhs are the only people who actively protect the cow. There have been riots and murders. The Sikhs alone fought for protection of cow and the Siromani Akali Dal was the only organisation which rendered help in the resulting cases. The Hindus never rendered active assistance.

I am just coming from Muktsar near which a cow was slaughtered by Muslims in their village. The news reached Muktsar and the Akalis there at once raided the village. The culprits had fled away; so there was no riot. But the proof of cow killing was taken possession of, and made over to the police, then and there by the Akalis. Predominant population of Muktsar is Hindu, but the Hindus never joined the raid though they had every sympathy with the Sikhs. Look at this honesty of these Hindu papers; while publishing the news they suppressed the part played by the Akalis. For it was giving direct lie to their false propaganda.

It is true that S. Baldevsingh's ministership cannot protect us from all the zulum of the Muslim members, influential persons and officials whose heads have been turned by this intoxicating power. Repeal of Communal Award and establishment of a Government in which no single community may dominate is the only remedy for all the present evils. If S. Baldev Singh's ministership alone could protect us, we would not be justified to ask for any other protection. The experience of S. Baldev Singh's ministership has all the more convinced us that there can be no effective protection for us as long as the present constitution operates. S Baldev Singh's ministership combined with the war situation has given us the best protection which was possible under the present form of Government. But this best protection is no substantial protection. Hence I demand Azad Punjab. I do not understand the gentlemen who are crying hoarse against the present constitution and plead their helplessness in serving their community under the present circumstances and yet oppose the only proposal which can protect us from the domination of a single community.

Let me state clearly that if Pakistan is established the Sikh community is lost for ever. The Hindus also may lose, but they have some seven provinces in which they can rule. If Punjab is gone everything is gone. No consideration can make us agree to Pakistan. The English may be strong enough to force Pakistan upon us, but we can in no case be willing to submit to Pakistan.

The Akhand Hindusthan Conference

Chakwal—15th. September 1943

Presidential Address

"Freedom without solidarity of united India in Akhand Hindustan has no significance or value. No unit can be powerful enough to maintain her freedom in case vivisection of India is agreed upon. I am yearning for the day when United India attains Self-government with Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and other communities as equal and responsible partner and when no community will be allowed to dominate over the other. When diverse clans inhabiting America, England and Russia, belonging to various religions and having different cultures can constitute one nation, there was no earthly reason to deprive India of her right to function as one single entity. I have throughout been a champion of complete independence for India and have placed this goal before me throughout my life. I am now, even in my old age, prepared to sacrifice everything for the achievement of my life's mission." Thus observed *Baba Kharak Singh*, the veteran Sikh Leader in the course of his presidential address delivered at the Akhand Hindustan Conference which commenced its sitting at Chakwal on the 15th. September 1943 in a specially decorated pandal in the presence of a huge gathering of Sikhs and Hindus drawn from the remotest corners of the North-Western Punjab.

Referring to the Azad Punjab Scheme, the Baba pointed out that it could not successfully solve the communal tangle in the country, and was of the opinion that it would further widen the gulf between the various communities to a pitch that it would never be bridged. He characterised the scheme as anti national and impracticable, likely to disintegrate the united forces of the parties. Condemning the scheme unequivocally, the speaker termed it as another name for Pakistan and advocated its whole-sale rejection.

Continuing his address, the President pressed for a national Government at the Centre and in the provinces and demanded the release of all political prisoners. He personally appealed to the Sikhs never to disassociate themselves from any movement started for the emancipation of the motherland on national lines and to offer whole-hearted co-operation to progressive and nationalist forces in the country. Concluding the Baba referred to the alleged mismanagement of Gurdwara funds by the party in power and exhorted all those present to concentrate their entire energies on freeing the Gurdwaras from the clutches of the present Akali caucus. He appealed for liberal donations towards the Bengal Relief fund.

Reception Committee Chairman's Address

In the course of his welcome address, *Sardar Harbans Singh*, Chairman of the Reception Committee, surveyed at considerable length the present political situation in the country with special reference to Sikh politics in the Punjab. The Sikh community, the speaker said, had always stood for the unity of India and could never allow vivisection of their motherland. He detailed various arguments against the adoption of the Azad Punjab Scheme, which in his opinion, would reduce the Sikhs in this ilaqa to a position of serfs and would prove a brake for the attainment of complete independence of the country.

Proceeding, the Chairman vehemently criticised the present Akali leadership, which, he opined, had degenerated to a sorrowful pitch. Criticising the *Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact*, the Sardar added that it was a dead letter as far as the Unionist Party was concerned. He also bitterly condemned the action of the Akali Party in co-operating with the Muslim League Government in the Frontier Province. He also vehemently condemned the attitude of the Akali Party regarding the use of beef, which he said, they had brought on a level with Jhatka.

Prominent amongst those who attended the conference were *S. B. Ujjal Singh, M. L. A., S. Uttam Singh Duggal, M. L. A., S. Amar Singh Jhabal, S. Amar Singh* of 'Sher-i-Punjab', *S. Labh Singh Narang, Baba Madan Singh Ghaga, S. Ranjodh Singh, Bakhshi Rachpal Singh, Lala Shiv Ram Sewak and Bhagat Nand Kishore*, Municipal Commissioner.

Azad Punjab Scheme Condemned

Half a dozen resolutions were unanimously adopted at the second open sitting of the Akhand Hindustan Conference held on the next day at Dera *Baba Kahan Singh*

under the chairmanship of *Baba Kharak Singh* when a huge gathering was present. *Sardar Amar Singh* of the "Sher-i-Punjab" moved the main resolution of the conference, which ran thus: "The vivisection of India in the opinion of this conference is most detrimental and undesirable from all points of view and will plunge various States under a new scheme of permanent warfare among themselves, making the states absolutely incapable of maintaining their independence after the partition.

"This conference reiterates its complete faith in the unity of India Akhand Hindustan and adds that the Azad Punjab scheme, which is similar to the Pakistan scheme, is detrimental to the best interests of the country, community, the nation and the Panth alike. The conference demands its whole sale rejection."

Moving the resolution, *Sardar Amar Singh* quoted facts and figures regarding the population and revenues in the various districts of the Punjab, to support his contention that the Azad Punjab scheme was injurious to the entire Sikh community in the Punjab.

Sardar Amar Singh Jhabal, a prominent Congressite Sikh leader, seconded the resolution and, in a forceful speech, exposed the tactics of the present Akali leadership.

Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal, M.L.A., while supporting the resolution, severely condemned the *Sikander-Baldev Singh* pact and revealed that *Sardar Baldev Singh* had told a deputation which waited upon him under his (the speaker's) leadership at Rawalpindi regarding the then impending appointment of the Director of Agriculture that he was helpless in the matter as the Governor of the Punjab wanted to appoint a junior Muslim to the post.

The speaker added that the Sikh Minister was incapable of safeguarding the Sikh interests and was a mere figure-head.

Replying to the question as to what he (the speaker) had done for his constituency in the Assembly and what he proposed to do to better the condition of his electorates, *Sardar Uttam Singh* admitted that, placed as they were they could do nothing for their voters, as the plight of non-agriculturist representatives in the Assembly was simply deplorable. The best brains in India, including *Mahatma Gandhi* and *Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru*, would not fare better if they had been placed in similar circumstances.

He further questioned Akali leaders as to what right they had to thrust a scheme which threatened the very existence of the people in this ilaqa—and without their consent or consultation. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

Sardar Labh Singh "Fakhar" proposed and *S. Labh Singh Narang* seconded the other resolution, demanding of *Sardar Baldev Singh* to quit the Cabinet as he had failed to safeguard Sikh interests and the terms of the pact had not been fulfilled.

The other resolutions demanded the immediate release of all political prisoners without further delay and pressed for the establishment of National Government at the Centre and in the provinces and appealed to the Sikhs all over the province to help Bengal sufferers to their utmost capacity. The last resolution opposed the amendments proposed in the Gurdwara Act and warned the Government and Sikh members in the Assembly not to support the bill. *Lala Shiv Ram "Sewak"*, in the course of a forceful speech, brought home to the vast audience the effects of the Azad Punjab scheme on the people of this locality (Jhelum district) for whom it was a question of life and death.

The A. I. Akhand Hindusthan Conference

"To-day when the Congress is shut behind the prison-bars and its leaders subjected to the ordeal of intense sufferings it amounts to an act of cowardice of the worst type to indulge in a campaign of vilification against them and it is only such people as have no sense of moral decency about them who can do this kind of thing," observed *Sardar Kharak Singh* in the course of his presidential address at the All-India Akhand Hindustan Conference held at Adamke in his home district of Sialkot under the auspices of Central Akali Dal on the 27th. November 1943.

Referring to the Peshawar speech of Master *Tara Singh* and the communal policy attributed to the Congress High Command, he said that he himself had had occasions to criticise and differ strongly from the Congress and, if in the future the Congress ignored the legitimate claims of the Sikhs, he would not hesitate to fight it tooth and nail but at a time like the present, when no such thing was under consideration and the Congress was passing through a great ordeal for the common

object of obtaining independence for India, one should not stab it in the back but sympathise with it and support it.

Sardar Kharak Singh began by characterising the present time at the most critical period in the history of the world and said that the situation was becoming more complicated everyday. He found it difficult to say anything with certainty about the future of the world, but he wished that out of the ruins of the present war some such world order might be born, in which all nations, big and small, would enjoy independence and had equal opportunities of progress. He thought that it could be possible only under some democratic system and for that reason he wished victory for democratic principles but he warned the British Government that, if they thought they could deny India her birthright of freedom and still have peace, they were grossly mistaken, because, even if they won the war, there could be no peace till India had been granted a free status in the comity of nations.

Sardar Kharak Singh referred to the famine condition in Bengal and the dismal failure of the Government machinery in preventing such a man-made calamity.

Referring to Pakistan and Azad Punjab schemes, the speaker regretted that, while other nations of the world had taken a lesson from the present war and favoured federation of nations, the short-sighted self-centred leadership in India was carrying on a half-splitting campaign for the vivisection of India, which for the last so many centuries was considered as one united whole, both culturally and politically.

The Punjab & Frontier Akhand Hindusthan Conference

Apropos the news item published in a *Sikh daily* that the *Sharomani Akali Dal* can be bound only by a decision of the Sikhs alone regarding the Azad Punjab Scheme and that the proposed Akhand Hindusthan Conference being held at *Rawalpindi* will be attended by *Sanatanists* and *Arya Samajists*, the General Secretary of the Reception Committee, the Punjab and Frontier Akhand Hindusthan Conference, sent telegraphic intimation to the *Sharomani Akali Dal* that only Sikhs will be allowed to vote on this resolution on the Azad Punjab scheme and asking the Akali leaders to attend the Conference and decide this issue once for all.

In this connection, *Sardar Kartar Singh Duggal*, President, *Singh Sabha*, *Rawalpindi* issued the following statement to the press, reviewing the details in a chronological order of the position taken up by leaders of the *Akali Party* regarding the Azad Punjab Scheme. "In November, 1942, on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of *Guru Nank Dev*, *Sardar Mela Singh*, *Akali* leader of *Rawalpindi*, condemned the Scheme and the Akali leaders both. At a representative meeting of Sikhs of *Pindi*, *Jhelum*, *Attock* district and the Frontier Province, held at *Guru Singh Sabha Rawalpindi* demand was made from Akali leaders to visit *Rawalpindi* and address *Diwan* and satisfy the Sikhs of this *ilaqa*. On January 23, 1943, another meeting of Akali leaders was held at *Gujar Khan*. *Bakhshi Gurcharan Singh*, Advocate of *Rawalpindi*, *Sardar Kishen Singh Alaq*, President, *Singh Sabha*, *Gujar Khan*, and others condemned the Akali leaders and the Azad Punjab Scheme. In view of the strong opposition to the Scheme from the Sikhs of this *ilaqa*, Akali leaders could not come to *Rawalpindi* till August 14 when a conference was held at *Punja Sahib*.

"In accordance with the decision arrived at between both parties at *Punja Sahib*, the Young Men's Khalsa Association, *Rawalpindi Cantonment* requested both wings to come to *Rawalpindi* and organise a joint conference and decide this issue. *Sardar Amar Singh* agreed to come but Akali leaders never agreed to a joint conference. Similar things happened at *Chakwal* and *Daultala*, when invitations were issued to Akali leaders to attend the conferences. Principal *Ganga Singh* was detained at *Sukho* while Master *Tara Singh* and *Gyani Kartar Singh* could not go beyond *Gujar Khan*."

PRESIDENT-ELECT ARRIVES

Baba Kharak Singh, President-elect of the Punjab and the Frontier Akhand Hindusthan Conference who arrived at *Rawalpindi* on the 4th. December 1943, was accompanied by *Sardar Kirpal Singh Majithia*, *Sardar Amar Singh* of the "Sher-i-Punjab", *Sardar Madan Singh Gaga*, Prof. *Ram Singh*, *Sardar Labh Singh* and several other Sikh leaders of *Malwa*, was accorded an enthusiastic reception at the railway station on their arrival.

That the Azad Punjab Scheme, sponsored by the *Sharomani Akali Dal*, and the present attitude of the Akali leaders towards the nationalist forces was

responsible for bringing together all the heterogenous elements in the political life of the country was evident from the big gathering that assembled in the evening in the special pandal of Gurdwara Akagarh, where the Conference opened its session.

A rousing reception was accorded to *Baba Kharak Singh*, President-elect of the Conference on his entering the Pandal along with prominent leaders. The Frontier leader, *Rai Bahadur Mehar Chand Khanna*, *Khan Ali Gul Khan*, President F. P. C. C., *Arbab Abdur Rehman*, M. L. A., *Sardar Isher Singh*, M. L. A., Barrister of Mardan, and *Sardar Milap Singh Azad*, were the recipients of a tremendous ovation on their arrival at the Pandal. Prominent among these who attended the Conference were: *Sardar Sant Singh M. L. A.* (Central), *S. Kirpal Singh Majithia*, *S. Amar Singh*, of the "Sher-i-Punjab," *Tikka Sant Singh Bedi*, *S. Labh Singh Fakhar*, *S. Labh Singh Narang*, Resident Secretary of the Central Akali Dal, *Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal*, M. L. A. Prof. *Ram Singh*, *Gyani Bacchittar Singh*, President, *Khalsa Mulwa Darbar Ludhiana*, *S. Sewa Singh Ghungerana*, *Lala Kunlan Lal Lamba* of Lyallpur, *Sardar Bahadur Beant Singh*, Principal *Ram Ditta Mal*, *Sardar Mehar Singh Chakwali*, *Bhagat Nand Kishore*, Municipal Commissioner, *Chakwal*, besides a large number of prominent leaders of this Ilqa.

Mr. Duggal's Address

"We have gathered here at a very critical time in human history when the destiny of mankind is at the cross-roads and a gigantic world war is being waged in all its ruthlessness, while in India our political future is at stake. One thing however, is writ large in the face of events and it is that no power can withhold our independence. It is now up to us to make up our minds what sort of independence do we desire, whether it is the independence for the entire geographical unit which we call India, or, for the country broken into pieces like Pakistan or Azad Punjab. I am sure you stand for the independence of a United India and refuse to be taken in by cheap sentimental slogans invented by interested parties to cut at the very root of our power, our greatness and our oneness. We have heavily suffered to achieve this unity and no price would be great to preserve it in future." With these words *Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal*, M. L. A., Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates.

Addressing the Sikh members of the audience, *Sardar Uttam Singh Duggal* said that the Sikhs had always been in the vanguard of India's fight for freedom and unity, adding that some misguided self-seekers for their own desire to follow the Pakistanists had invented the formula "Azad Punjab." Analysing the position of Sikhs in the so-called "Azad Punjab," the Chairman quoted facts and figures to prove that the Sikhs would be the losers if the Scheme was translated into action, and they would be guilty of setting a precedent of breaking up their mother country into various communal zones always at war with one another. It was un-Sikh-like to throw the area, the speaker added, where Sikh Culture had made tremendous strides and which had given them most men of learning and wisdom at the mercy of a mediaeval religious State. He apprehended that the division of Jats and non-Jats would be perpetrated and then Jats would be broken into various pieces and complained that men who were staunch nationalists the other day had fallen in line with Jinnahites and men who had made common cause with the Hindus some time ago had turned their bitterest enemies.

President's Address

"India is one whole. The same blood runs in the veins of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, all inhabitants of our motherland. They may profess different faiths, but they have been for times immemorial characterised as one nation. If people of diverse religions, different cultures and various nationalities inhabiting Great Britain, America and Russia can be styled as one nation, what is there on earth to debar Indians from becoming an Indian Nation. Whenever the question of India's freedom is brought to the fore-front and it appears that bonds of slavery are going to be unloosened some forces are brought into being by our rulers to serve as a brake on our progress and place handicaps in the way of the country's salvation. We are determined to achieve independence and no power, howsoever strong, can withhold that from us now. I fought my whole life for this ideal and will die in harness after seeing a united and independent India." Thus observed *Baba Kharak Singh*, President of the Conference in the course of his stirring presidential address, which was read by *Sardar Labh Singh Fakhar*.

Proceeding, he challenged British statesmen to name any other country where separate electorates were in force and where political rights were distributed on

the basis of religious beliefs. This the veteran leader characterised as the sole cause of the country's ills and added that as long as the foreign power was dominating their country, unity could not be achieved. The venerable Baba pointed that Pakistan had its birth in England.

Unequivocally condemning the Azad Punjab scheme, the President styled it as anti-national and most detrimental to the interests of the Panth and the country. The present anti-Congress attitude of the Akali Party, the Sardar observed, was most unfair on the part of those who had been part and parcel of the Congress machinery and that it was a stab in the back when the Congress leaders were behind the bars, adding that the Congress was the fountain-head from which the present Akali leaders had drawn inspiration and strength.

He appealed to Sikhs to work in collaboration with the Congress, adding that he would fight the community's rights when the time came.

Criticising the proposed Gurdwara Amendment Bill, the President sounded a note of warning to the Unionist Ministry, asking them not to meddle in the religious affairs of the Sikhs by enacting this measure and exhorted the Sikhs to rise to the occasion, deposing those self-seekers who in the garb of their leaders, were stabbing them in the back at a critical juncture in the history of the world.

Khal Ali Gul Khan, President, F. P. C. C., in course of an elevating address, brought home to the vast audience that the Congress was the only national organisation in the country working on the right lines, fighting for the emancipation of their motherland, adding that it was still a living force in the Frontier Province which fact had been truly demonstrated in their recent tour of the province despite the assertions of Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, the Frontier Premier. The Speaker condemned Master Tara Singh for attacking Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, who was not free to reply to baseless allegations.

The Khan further added that their only struggle was against Churchill, Amery and Wavell and not against Mr. *Tara Singh* and Mr. *Jinnah*. In the Frontier, the Khan continued, unlike the Punjab, they had only one leader and as true soldiers, they were following the line chalked out by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan.

Ridiculing the position of Master Tara Singh and the Akali leaders, the Frontier Congress President stated that on the one hand they stood in opposition to Pakistan and on the other hand, they had joined the present Frontier Ministry, which was constituted with the avowed object of establishing Pakistan.

Sardar Kirpal Singh Majithia, in the course of his speech, laid great stress on the educational needs of the community and eulogized the services rendered to the community by the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the late Sir Sunder Singh Majithia in the domain of education, adding that independence could not be achieved without education.

Resolutions

The spacious pandal at the Akalgarh Gurdwara was packed to capacity when the second open sitting of the Conference commenced on the 5th December 1943 under the presidentship of Baba Kharak Singh. Several delegates from the Frontier, including prominent Congress leaders, namely, Khan Ali Gul Khan, Arbab Abdul Rehman, Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna, Sardar Isher Singh, S. Milap Singh Azad and Mr. Shiv Kumar attended the session. Prominent Hindu leaders of the town, representing various organisations, were also present. The conference continued with a break of hardly an hour at 4 p. m.

Sardar Amar Singh, of the "Sher-i-Punjab," in the course of a forceful speech, supported by facts and figures, moved the first resolution of the conference, which ran thus.

"This historic session of the Akhand Hindustan Conference unequivocally condemns the Azad Punjab scheme and reiterates that the people of the Rawalpindi Division in particular have their implicit faith in the solidarity of India as one organised whole. The Sikh Panth would never be a party to any scheme that aims at the vivisection of India and attempts to do away with the unity and solidarity of the country as a whole, and would be prepared to undergo all sacrifices to achieve this object. The conference, therefore, rejects this nefarious scheme altogether."

The resolution was seconded by *Sardar Mul Singh Domeli* and was supported by *Lala Shiv Ram Sewak*, who, in the course of a three-hour speech, subjected the scheme to a trenchant criticism and challenged the Akali leaders to contest the first elections of the S. G. P. C. on this very issue and abide by the vote and decision of the newly constituted Prabandhak Committee's view and thus put an

end to this controversy once for all. He answered several questions put to him by the public.

"I am prepared to do my outmost and offer any sacrifice necessary for the establishment of Pakistan and the Azad Punjab in Northern India provided Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Tara Singh secure a declaration from Mr. Churchill, Mr. Amery and Lord Wavell that freedom would be granted to India immediately," said Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna, M. L. A., while supporting the resolution against the Azad Punjab scheme.

"If I am assured that India could attain her freedom by the establishment of Pakistan or the Azad Punjab, I will not stand in its way. If a declaration is made that the British will quit India if the Congress agrees to Pakistan or the Azad Punjab scheme, I can assure Muslim leaders that this will be done forthwith."

R. B. Mehr Chand Khanna, added: "I reiterate that the British will not leave India and will never grant independence to our motherland. This is only a stunt created by British diplomats to hoodwink America and other nations in the world. Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna stated that this visit to America was an eye-opener for him and it was there that he learnt the real significance of the Pakistan movement from the British point of view.

The Frontier leader further detailed the circumstances leading to the establishment of the Muslim League Ministry in his province and once again challenged the Government to allow the Congress members of the Frontier Assembly to attend the session even in handcuffs and fetters under police escort for a single sitting and see the result.

Alluding to the subject of the Sikh by-election in the Frontier Province, R. B. Mehr Chand Khanna retorted that it was a white lie on the part of Master Tara Singh and other Akali leaders who stated that the Hindus wanted the Ministry in the province and added that all the nine Hindu members of the Frontier Assembly were with the Congress Party.

Proceeding further, Mr. Khanna added: "Any Hindu who contemplates the establishment of the Hindu Raj in the country and any Muslim who wishes the creation of the Muslim Raj or Pakistan in India and any Sikh who dreams of the Sikh Raj are all enemies of their motherland. India is sure to have one rule—and that of Indians jointly. There will be one slogan throughout the length and breadth of the country: the slogans will be "Independent India and Free India."

An old friend of the British, who had been relying on their promises during the last two decades, Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand advised them to remain in India as friends and leave India as friends and make no attempt to strengthen the bond of slavery. He brought it home to them that India was bound to attain freedom, be it to-morrow or day after. No power in the Universe, he said, could withhold what was India's due. Concluding his address, the frontier leader exhorted all those present to discard all controversies and join their hands in bringing freedom to the country as early as possible.

Sardar Sant Singh, M.L.A. (Central), moved the second resolution, urging the establishment of National Government at the Centre and the release of all political prisoners. The resolution ran thus: "This conference records its considered opinion that the establishment of National Government at the Centre is an immediate and vital necessity both for the people of India and the British Government. With a view to establish National Government, expressing the will of the people, it is essential that all political prisoners should be immediately released and leaders of all political parties should be invited to establish the same."

In the course of an elaborate speech, characteristic of the parliamentarian and his experience, Sardar Sant Singh made out a fitting case for the establishment of National Government and advanced cogent reasons to assert that the establishment of National Government at the Centre was primarily in the best interests of the British Government itself. Quoting extracts from the proceedings of Parliament and the Central Assembly, the Sardar proved that only the Indian National Congress could deliver the goods as it represented the will of the people. Sardar Sant Singh pointed out that there would be no necessity of Pakistan or the Azad Punjab once the National Government was established in the country. Concluding, the speaker asked the vast audience present to give a wide berth to self-seekers who were out to put a brake in the advancement of the country's march towards the goal of India's emancipation and warned communal die-hards of the consequences of the campaigns started to grind their own axe.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Satyarathi and carried unanimously, while only one man in the vast audience voted against it.

The last resolution exhorted the Sikhs to do their utmost in affording relief to Bengal sufferers. The resolution was moved, in a touching speech, by Prof. *Balbir Singh* from Lahore. *Sant Tehl Singh* of Allah, District Gujrat, a prominent Sikh theologian, in seconding the resolution, enjoined on the Sikhs, according to the scriptures, to pool their entire resources and help the needy and distressed.

The National Liberal Federation of India

24th. Session—Bombay—29th. December 1943

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's Welcome Address

The Twenty-fourth Session of the National Liberal Federation of India was held at Bombay on the 29th. December 1943 under the Presidentship of *Sir Maharaj Singh*.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates, pleaded that an unequivocal assurance be given to the British public that "all classes, creeds and shades of political thought in India were behind this war" as a means of ending the deadlock. He observed: "The fact remains that India has been assured that the Cripps proposals still hold the field—which can only mean that Dominion Status is promised to India on the conclusion of the War. After all, it is not any particular British statesman, or a group of statesmen, who will decide India's future. It is the British man and woman in the street who has vote, that will have the final say. Will he be influenced by an obstructive attitude to India's war effort, or will he be influenced by unanimous and whole-hearted support to the War? Undoubtedly the latter. The men who will obtain self-Government for India will not be those who are constantly speaking and writing in these troubled and difficult times, of India's rights and India's wrongs; but it will be those men who are fighting India's cause on battle fields all over the world. It will be those men and women who are unstintingly helping the war effort of India. It is the work of these that will influence the man and woman who really has the greatest power in England. It is the man and woman in the street who has the power to displace a powerful Cabinet Minister within the space of a couple of days. This has been known to have happened on more than one occasion in the past. If we are to be far-sighted in the interests of our mother country, we have to see that both in England and amongst the Allied nations, our case is not jeopardised by the unwise actions of some who do not realise the harm they are doing to their own country. It is far better to speak out and face unpopularity than to bandage our eyes, plug our ears and drug our conscience. Let the dead past bury its dead. In my humble opinion, it is not a question of withdrawing any particular resolution that may have been passed by any political party. It is much more important to give unequivocal assurances to the British public and to the peoples of the Allied powers that all classes, all creeds, and all shades of political thought in India are behind this war; that, not only will they not impede the war effort in any way in the future, but on the other hand, they are prepared unconditionally to help, by word and deed, every effort that India can contribute towards a final and victorious conclusion of this terrible War. If such assurances could be forthcoming, I personally believe that not only India will gain self-Government after the War, we may be enabled to play a most material and important part in the administration of our own country.

No Indian can possibly desire to see any of his countrymen behind prison bars for their political convictions, specially such as have passed their lives in the service of their country. But let us face facts. Congressmen cannot deny that from the beginning of August of last year disorders and mob rule prevailed in most parts of India, and that attempts at sabotage still continue in some areas. It is said that the Congress and its leaders had not encouraged or engineered these acts of violence. Assuming this to be so the Congress leaders cannot be absolved from responsibility for what occurred because as sensible men they should have realised, from past experience, that a mass civil disobedience movement would inevitably result in mass violence. The Allied nations are surely not going to run the slightest risk of such a state of affairs prevailing again. Such risks can

be, to a great extent, removed by such assurances as I have explained. Mr. *Gandhi*, if he chose, could give such an undertaking on behalf of the Congress, for he has been appointed the leader of the movement in these words: "Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of *Gandhiji* and the Committee request him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken." These powers, given to Mr. *Gandhi* by a resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, surely include doing what he considers best in the interests of the country.

It may not be possible immediately for the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League to come to an understanding on the future Constitution of India, or even on the Cripps proposals, but these two political parties can certainly come on the same platform to urge the people of our country to support the war efforts of India by word and deed. This may be a starting point for agreement on political issues such as may become advisable for the duration of the War. Such a change of policy is bound to have a most beneficial effect on all the peoples of the Allied Powers and would certainly entitle the representatives of India to a place on the Peace Conference which must follow a victorious conclusion to the War. India, if its leaders have fully helped towards winning the war, would have an effective voice at the Peace Conferences; but not if they have acted in a manner which has weakened and thwarted, however unintentionally, the war effort.

There is a persistent and consistent demand from all shades of political thought that this so-called deadlock should be solved, and I am sure that all Liberals are as anxious as Congressmen, at present out of prison, and all other political parties who have voiced the same opinion. If we are anxious to help, first and foremost we must face realities. We must remember that the British public and the peoples of the Allied Powers cannot forget what has happened in India since August of last year. Those who have suggestions to make for the solution of this problem must keep this aspect of the case before them. Any tendency to ignore these realities will only make the task fruitless. Therefore the suggestions must be such as are likely to have immediate results. Looking at it from every point of view, I cannot but come to the conclusion that the suggestions I have been bold enough to make are the only ones that will clear the air and will enable our public men to consider and discuss, in a calmer and clearer atmosphere, the next steps they would be prepared to take to solve India's constitutional problems.

The Presidential Address

Sir *Maharaj Singh*, in his Presidential Address, referred to the Congress policy since 1939, and said that some of our present day evils are due to the defection of the Congress Ministries in 1939. He also referred to "the mistake made by the Congress in refusing to form coalition ministries" and characterised the Congress resolution of August 1942 as "a great blunder." He added: But if the Congress are to be blamed for sins of omission and commission the Government of India and the British Government are also open to legitimate criticism. Instead of declaring a complete change of policy at the commencement of the war by filling the Governor-General's Executive Council with representative Indians, they were content with suggesting advisory committees forgetting that no self-respecting Indian looked or can look upon these as substitutes for the possession of executive power. Further, no representative Conference of Indian leaders was summoned by the then Viceroy either in 1939 or at any time subsequently to discuss not only the political situation but the institution of measures for the protection of India and for ascertaining the best method of helping the Allied cause. Most thinking people realised on the outbreak of war that it would be long and bitter and not a few anticipated the entry of the Japanese sooner or later on the side of Germany. If Sir *Stafford Cripps* had come to India with his proposals in 1939 or early in 1940 instead of 1942, I venture to state that there would have been an excellent prospect of their general acceptance and that India would have been a happier country to-day. There had been then no cry of Pakistan as we know it in its present form and no threat of mass civil disobedience. Under present conditions, however, we are face to face with a divided India, with thousands of our fellow countrymen, including many prominent and popular leaders in prison, the retention by European officials of the key departments of Finance, Defence and Home in the Government of India, a complete absence of popular government in large portions of India, swollen prices, general distress and, last but not least, famine in large and densely populated areas. The suggestions of well-known Indian leaders and of Non-Party Conferences composed of moderate men sincerely anxious to bring about

peace between the Government and the people have been brushed aside without assigning any reasons. Attempts to approach Mahatma *Gandhi* in order to ascertain his views and those of the Congress Working Committee in regard to the present political situation have been consistently refused on the plea that it was essential for Congress leaders first to denounce openly what they had previously commended. It is of little use, however, to dwell at length on past mistakes on this side or the other. A more profitable though a much more difficult task is to decide what practical steps can be taken for a solution of the present deplorable situation.

THE COMMUNAL ISSUE

The chief problem that faces India at the present time—and it is most complicated—is the communal issue, that is to say, the tension between Hindus and Muslims or, to put it into more concrete language, between the Congress on the one side and the Muslim League on the other. Government in India have failed to solve it. In fact, their past actions and attitude have aggravated separatist tendencies. By us also opportunities alas! have been lost more than once. If only in years gone by, when a scheme for a federated India was on the anvil and later approved by the British Parliament in the Government of India Act, 1935, the majority community had agreed to the grant of large residuary powers to the provinces, or if the *Cripp's* proposals in spite of certain defects had been accepted, it is probable that the present communal impasse would not have arisen or would at least have been less tense. Now the question before us is whether the India of the future shall be undivided or partitioned. As a Liberal and an Indian Christian—and in either capacity a representative of minority interests—I have never concealed my personal view in favour of a unitary Government in this sub-continent and I believe that outside the Muslim League this opinion is shared by all minorities such as the Scheduled Castes, Indian Christians, Sikhs and Parsis. We would greatly prefer that a self-governing India should at least start under one Central Government—even though with provinces autonomous save for a few subjects such as Defence and Foreign Affairs—and be divided only if the experience of 15 or 20 years shows that partition is essential. I believe that I am right in stating that in a Soviet Russia, while the right of the various composing nations to freedom or self-determination is recognised, including the right to secede and form independent States, no nation in spite of religious and linguistic differences has so far parted from the Central Government. The existence of two separate Indias with their own armies, tariffs and foreign relations may well be conducive more to mutual strife than harmony especially when as has often happened in Europe, the minority in one area is likely to appeal from time to time to the majority in the contiguous zone. Strangely enough, the Muslim League, while regarding statutory guarantees at the Centre as nugatory for the purpose of protecting Muslim minorities, stresses its desire to give the same guarantees to minorities in Pakistan. Then, too, it must not be forgotten that, whereas Muslims in the proposed Hindu India will be a small minority, in Pakistan the Hindus of Bengal and the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab will form large and, may be difficult, minorities. It is one thing, however, for us to proclaim the opinion of the majority and quite another to win the acceptance of those who are opposed to it especially when the opposition consists of large and influential Muslim minority claiming millions of adherents. And if it is not possible to secure voluntary acceptance what is to be done? If as some say physical force is the only remedy, it is indeed a truly terrifying prospect.

The solution of the problem of minorities in India is more complicated than in other countries because of the large number of Muslims both relative and absolute. To deny the influence of the Muslim League may sound well on a public platform but it is not realistic. There is no easy solution. That is why I deliberately refrain from suggesting in any scheme. There are many in the field, some of them admirable on paper, but none has so far been acceptable to both the Congress and the Muslim League. There are those who tell us that the departure of the British from India will lead to an early removal of communal difficulties. It passes my comprehension however, why the same persons do not tell us now what the solution will be. I repeat that the problem of minorities is extremely difficult and cannot be decided by easy generalisations. I have no doubt in my mind that it was the main cause of the Great War of 1914 and the World War of 1939, and shall content myself with citing only the instances of Alsace-Lorraine, Czecho-Slovakia, the Balkan States, Poland and Danzig. The Treaty of Versailles and the Minorities Guarantee Treaties signed

by many powers twenty years ago and more did not remove it. And this complex problem is not confined to Europe. It exists within the British Commonwealth, for example, in South Africa and Ireland and as recent experience shows in Burma and Ceylon. It is a world problem and will be one of the crucial difficulties calling for solution at the next Peace Conference.

PAKISTAN QUESTION MUST BE POSTPONED

In these circumstances my own view is that no final decision can or should reasonably be expected in the midst of a world catastrophe on the question of Pakistan. No one can predict with any confidence what will be the precise nature of the reconstructed world. For instance, will nations in future stand alone or in federated groups? If the latter, what will be rights and powers of such groups and nationalities? These are vital questions which will have to be dealt with and decided by a World Conference on which we must insist that India should be represented. It may well be that a solution of the problem in Europe may be of help to us in India. I would appeal, therefore, as I did last March and in previous recent years, to Hindus, Muslims and others to postpone any final judgment on the one side or the other till peace has been restored. One thing at any rate is certain. It is that talks of fighting for or against Pakistan or of civil war are highly injurious. Do such speakers realise the implications of what they say? How, for instance, and where, will the fight commence and with what weapons? The only fighting that one can visualize is communal rioting on a large scale with a resulting intensification of ill-feeling. If the recent experience of internal turmoil in Spain has any lesson for the world it is that bloodshed and destruction in a civil war do not lead to a permanent solution of a country's difficulties.

BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE

As regards what should be done in the immediate future it seems to me that either we must acquiesce in the continuance of the present situation at any rate till the war is over or make an effective attempt to reach at last a temporary solution. The first alternative is no doubt that which commends itself to the Cabinet in England and the Government of India as a whole. It has the merit of shelving the difficulty and of imposing an outward calm. I am of opinion however, that it cannot commend itself to right-thinking persons. It is a case of crying peace where there is no peace. No Indian, whatever his party or creed, is satisfied with the existing form of Government either at the Centre or in many provinces. Its continuance will only lead to increased underground discontent and further deplorable tension between the British and Indian races at the end of the war. Large sections of opinion in the U. S. A. as well as in Great Britain sympathise with us on this point. The present policy of the British Government of insistence on an agreed solution by Indians, theoretically justifiable though it may appear, is as ungracious as it is undignified. No ruling power can legitimately fold its hands and stand aloof in questions of vital importance whether in India or elsewhere. Great Britain did not adopt this attitude in dealing with the problem of self-Government in Canada, South Africa or Ireland. They and we must try again and yet again until a solution is reached.

CONTACT WITH LEADERS MUST BE PERMITTED

As regards the second alternative it seems to me that the first thing is for the Viceroy and the Government of India to allow an approach to be made to *Mahatma Gandhi* as soon as possible. We Liberals do not share all the political and economic views of the Mahatma and we have often deplored some of his actions, but there is no doubt that he is the leading personality in the largest political party in India and enjoys very great influence and prestige among the Indian masses, while his name is known to millions in Europe, America and Africa. No really satisfactory solution, therefore, even temporary, can be secured without his acquiescence, if not support. The late Viceroy and his Government made, I venture to think, a great mistake in not allowing a responsible Indian leader, such as Mr. *Rajagopalachari* or the American statesman, Mr. *Phillips*, to approach Mahatma Gandhi. India would not have been reduced to chaos if these and other responsible persons had questioned Mr. Gandhi on his views on the existing political impasse and on the means for ending it. If he had asked and still asks, as is probable that the opinion of members of the Congress Working Committee should be ascertained, I would impose no conditions on their meeting and deliberations. Knowing Mr. Gandhi's consistently strong views on non-violence, we cannot expect him or them to admit responsibility for the deplorable and wicked acts of sabotage

which took place in August and subsequent months last year or even to cancel their resolution of August, 1942. Self-respecting and patriotic men, who have sacrificed much cannot reasonably be expected to denounce their past. All that is necessary is for the Congress to treat that resolution as a dead letter. I believe that this will be done. For this purpose I am of opinion that the Congress leaders should be released unconditionally. Many of the rank and file, including scores of members of legislatures, are now out of jail and the number of releases is increasing and will, I hope, increase. It is unjustifiable to detain men and women in jail without trial and without their being supplied even with the reasons for their detention. Further, I do not believe for a moment that the Congress leaders would advocate peace with Imperialistic Japan or renounce their anti-Fascist attitude.

CONFERENCE OF ALL PARTIES

The next step would be a conference between them and the leaders of the Muslim League and representatives of other important minorities and interest with the immediate object of forming composite National Government at the Centre and in the Provinces. In 1941 I did what I could through personal interviews to persuade Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah to meet each other but failed. Others have similarly failed. In this connection I wish to say that no party has been more pressing in its desire to see a settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League than the Indian Communists. In spite of our holding views different from theirs in certain important matters all honour is due to them for they have tried to do. For several years I have openly and privately pleaded that the Viceroy should hold a conference of leading representatives of different parties and let India know the result of their deliberation. It is only at such a conference, for instance, that the full implications of a scheme such as Pakistan can be adequately discussed. At present we are in the dark as to details. These, no doubt, are governed by principles but the latter not infrequently have to be modified after a discussion of details. Anyhow, it is at least possible that a temporary solution would be reached at such a conference and National Governments be formed throughout India composed of representative persons. If, however, the conference is not successful the peaceful and other effective method of arbitration should be tried. If even that failed, India and the world outside would at least know where the blame lay. For my own part, as I said in December, 1940, and March, 1943, at All-Indian Christian Conferences and also at the Lucknow Provincial Non-Party Conference in December, 1941, "I would not mind if all the members of the Governor General's Council were Hindus or Muslims. I would not object if they were all members of the Congress or the Muslim League because I feel that in nine out of ten questions no friction or difference on communal grounds can possibly arise."

INDIAN STATES

Liberals have consistently urged reforms and political progress in the Indian States as well as in British India. It is obviously impossible for contiguous territories not to be affected by each other's conditions. In such cases there is always mutual interaction. If self-government, for instance, has been declared to be the goal in the near future of Indians in British India, it is inconceivable that their brethren in Indian States, with whom they are connected by ties of language, culture, customs and religion should not have similar aspirations. States in India are at present admittedly in different stages of political and educational evolution, but in all it should be the declared policy of their Rulers to prepare their people as rapidly as possible for full responsible government.

Proceedings and Resolutions

Second Day—Bombay—30th. December 1943

Need for Ending Deadlock

At the session of the National Liberal Federation to-day, the President, Sir Maharaj Singh himself moved a resolution condoling the deaths of Messrs. N. C. Ray, one of the General Secretaries of the Federation, Sorab Vadia and C. L. Narayana Sastri during the past year. The resolution was adopted.

Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao of Madras moved the following resolution recording deep satisfaction at the success of the Allied arms on all fronts.

"The National Liberal Federation of India records its deep satisfaction at the success of the Allied arms on all fronts. In particular it views with pride the

splendid part played by Indian soldiers in Africa, Italy and other theatres of war.

"The Federation appeals to the people of India to associate themselves with the war effort till victory is attained. At the same time it desires to impress on the Central and Provincial Governments the absolute necessity for creating the political and psychological conditions essential to enable Indians to consider the war as their own and to exert their maximum effort with a view to ensure the speedy victory of the Allies."

Mr. *Vinayaka Rao* declared India had a legitimate cause to feel proud of it by virtue of her contribution to that success. The speaker regretted that Mr. *Churchill* in his statement on the North Africa victory had failed to mention India, while referring to the contribution of the Dominions to the victory. Even Mr. *Amery*, the custodian of Indian affairs in Parliament, could not find time to mention her part in the victory, and it had been left to the Commander-in-Chief of India to acknowledge this part in the North African victory.

Mr. *Vinayaka Rao* declared this war was India's as Allied victory in this war would mean consummation of India's political aspirations. It was the duty of the Government at the Centre as well as the Provincial Governments to make the people of India feel that this war was their own. It was regrettable that the ratio of Indian officers in the Indian Army was so small as compared with British officers. It was essential that Indians fighting at the front should feel that they were fighting their own war.

Looking ahead to the peace at the end of the war, the speaker hoped that, as the Allies dictated terms to Germany and Japan, they would not also dictate terms to India's representatives but would listen to them.

Mr. *V. K. Shastri* of Bombay seconded the resolution and Mr. *Shapurji Gazdar* supported it and the resolution was passed unanimously.

The Political Situation

The Rt. Hon. *V. S. Srinivasa Sastri* next moved the resolution on the political situation in the country. The following is the text of the resolution :—

"The National Liberal Federation considers that the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee of August, 1942, sanctioning mass civil disobedience was wrong and ill-conceived, and it deplores and condemns the sabotage and violence which took place last year. At the same time, it disapproves the policy of the Government of India in continuing to detain in prison without trial well known and popular Indian leaders and in refusing to allow any approach to be made to Mr. *Gandhi* and other Congress leaders since their incarceration. In view of the present political and war situation and the fact that the Congress is the largest political party in India, and, last but not least in the hope and belief that the Congress leaders will accept the wishes of millions in this country and agree to treat the resolution of August 1942 as a dead letter, the Federation requests the Government of India to release these persons unconditionally.

"It appeals to these leaders when released, as well as to the leaders of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha and other important political parties and interests, to convene a conference and to co-operate in forming National Composite Governments at the centre and in the provinces, that at the centre to be treated by the British Government on the same footing as the Governments of the Dominions. Such co-operation should be given without prejudice to the different viewpoints of the various political parties regarding the future constitution of India and with the earnest desire to leave any important controversial matters for decision after the war. The Federation is convinced that composite National Governments will be of great help in clearing misunderstandings between the various parties and between them and the Government, in increasing mutual confidence and in bringing about conditions which will facilitate the inauguration of a satisfactory and workable constitution for India when peace has been restored. In this connection, this Federation strongly stresses the continuing obligation of the British Government and the Government of India to take early steps to further the aspirations of the people and to establish National Governments at the centre and in the provinces notwithstanding the existence of domestic difficulties."

Mr. *Sastri* declared that, in the first place, the Liberal Federation desired that the Congress leaders should be released without any condition and then they should agree to treat the August Resolution of last year as a dead letter. He felt that this was not a very extreme demand as Congressmen themselves should realise that there was no more scope for their resolution and they would lose nothing in taking

this opportunity to let the resolution rest. In this request of the Liberal Federation, millions of the people of India would join with them. He expressed the view that the opinion of the country as a whole was not in favour of the August Resolution or what followed it by way of disturbances in the country. In fact, great bodies of Indians stood aloof from the resolution and all that it implied. Further so far as the effect of the resolution was concerned, the war effort had not suffered; the Government only suffered a slight embarrassment, if anything. This clearly showed that the masses of India did not agree with the resolution and many of them would not be sorry if it were withdrawn.

When the leaders were released, Mr. Sastri said the next step to take would be, that they, in conjunction with the Muslim League, the Mahasbha and other parties, would convene a Conference. The representatives should sit together and pool their wisdom and evolve plans for the immediate future. These deliberations should bring about what they could call a National and Composite Government both at the Centre and in the Provinces.

Explaining what he meant by composite Government, Mr. Sastri said that, when the Provincial Governments were constituted in the immediate future, they should not be wholly composed of representatives of the majority party in power. If, for instance, the Congress party was in the majority in any province, the Cabinet there would, of course, contain a majority of Congressmen but what he suggested was that it should also contain representatives of important minorities. In other words, he recommended a coalition government in the province. Of course when the provinces had such Governments in working, it would follow that such governments could not function unless there was a similar government at the Centre. Mr. Sastri said that this was a consummation which was to be devoutly wished for and government should cordially welcome such an understanding. For, it was the paramount interest of the government that in this country conditions should be established which would ensure the final victory in this war on the side of the Allies. Referring to the present political impasse, Mr. Sastri said that the greatest complaint to-day was that the deadlock politically and otherwise seemed not to be resolvable, for the government put the responsibility for taking the initiative on the people. Government spokesmen had continually repeated that the deadlock was the result of discord and disagreements among the warring parties in the country, and therefore the government should do nothing but watch and wait until the leaders composed their quarrels and became friends and co-operated in establishing conditions favourable to the establishment of a common government. Continuing, Mr. Sastri said: "I do not know how a government ruling over 400 million people armed to the teeth, with all arms of force and violence that could be imagined, how a government which had taken to itself all the powers possible and conceivable and rule with absolute sway, with no check whatever to its authority, how a Government established in that supreme and unassailable position, can tell the world and hope to be believed that it is not their function at all to interfere and that their duty is to watch benevolently, perhaps complacently, perhaps gleefully while the leaders are unable to come to a mutual understanding. A government of that kind repeating this absurd proposition day after day, seems to be condemning itself out of its own lips and I should be pitying the world if the world believes it. I am sure that the sensible part of the world, whether this country or outside, does not believe it."

He declared that it was the business of the government to bring the people together, to put themselves in the confidence of all and so arrange that a united constitution was possible not only for the period of the war, but for the period succeeding the war. "We do not believe the government when they say that unity of the country is not possible, because there are disturbances and discords in the country. These disturbances and discords must be effaced and government must take its due share in this pacification to bring the parties together and go ahead, as they have done previously so many times before, in the shaping of the future Constitution of India."

Mr. Sastri insisted that the Central Government, when formed, should be placed on a footing of absolute equality with other Dominions and Britain herself, in the matter of operations in this country. The Central Government should be in the same position as the South African Government, the New Zealand and the Australian Governments. "Any position inferior to them would put us in an invidious situation and disable us in future from taking our place to which we are entitled. Any position inferior to this, we cannot with self-respect accept."

CONSTITUTION FOR INDIA

Mr. Sastri conceded that any permanent constitution for India would have to be deferred till the end of the war when the parties could meet and discuss their problems and evolve a common acceptable constitution in a more harmonious atmosphere. He also said that such questions of the order of importance as Pakistan should be deferred till the end of the war. In this connection, he recalled the resolution which the Liberal Federation had adopted at the last session at Madras, expressing themselves categorically against the division of the country into Pakistan and Hindustan. The Liberals still stood by that resolution and they still maintained that position. But that question and other questions of like magnitude could be safely postponed till the end of the war when the major and minor parties could meet in a peaceful atmosphere and settle their problems. Mr. Sastri, concluding, said that their resolution was a very moderate demand which no one could possibly take exception to and he commended the resolution for their acceptance.

The hon. Sir B. P. Singh Roy, seconding the resolution, declared that the National Liberal Federation had all along dissociated itself from direct action as launched by the Congress. He hoped that the time was not far distant when even the Congress would give up the programme of direct action and revert back to the policy of liberalism, namely, working the constitution to the best advantage of the people and further advancing the political rights of the people by conventions. He was sure that Mahatma Gandhi would not hesitate to advise the Congress to treat the August resolution as a dead letter.

Proceeding, Sir Brijoy Prasad urged the necessity for the release of the Congress leaders and asserted that the Government of India was equally responsible for the deadlock and hence they should also act quickly to bring about unity. He also stressed the need for setting up composite Governments in the various provinces.

Prof. Aha Janti, supporting the resolution, deplored that there was at the present time a virtual dissociation of the people from the administration of the country. This was the time and immediately after the war, that long range policies for the welfare of not only this country but almost all countries were to be formulated and it was a tragedy that there was a political deadlock in India. He suggested the withdrawal of the August resolution by Mahatma Gandhi, and the release of Congress leaders and that the majority party in the country should undertake the formation of composite cabinets in all the provinces. Politics, he said, was after all a game and if one move failed, Congress leaders should not hesitate to change their course. It might not be possible for smaller parties and leaders to retrace their steps, but in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, there could be no difficulty in his withdrawing the resolution.

The motion was passed unanimously.

India's Representation on Peace Conference

Mr. T. R. Venkatarma Sastri moved the following resolution :—

"The National Liberal Federation considers that India should be represented at the peace Conference by duly accredited Indians on the same basis as other Dominions and be assigned a place worthy of her culture and her championship of the great cause of universal peace. At such a conference, prominence should be given by the representatives of India to the abolition of the colour bar and the establishment of full political and economic equality between the peoples of the East and the West."

Mr. Sastri said that, on previous occasions, India had been represented by persons appointed by the Government of India for assisting the Secretary of State. In practice, it was the Secretary of State, who was India's spokesman. What the Federation now urged was that India should have the peoples' representatives appointed by a national government.

Sardar Sodhbans, supporting the resolution, said that, if the Atlantic Charter was applicable to India, as it was claimed, then surely Britain had no right to appoint the representatives for India. Dr. P. N. Daruwala supported the motion which was passed.

The Bengal Famine

The hon. Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru next moved the following resolution :

"The National Liberal Federation of India shares the universal feeling of horror at the tragedy that has overwhelmed Bengal and has resulted in general misery and starvation in that important province and deaths on a scale hitherto unprecedented in the recent history of famines in India. It sympathises deeply with the people of Bengal and Orissa in their sufferings. The Federation is strongly

of opinion that both the Central and Provincial Governments as well as His Majesty's Government are largely responsible for the serious maladministration which has led to the calamity by lack of provision and effective planning and the shortage of food which should have been foreseen and prevented. The Federation is also deeply distressed at the fact that disease has followed famine and is exacting an even heavier toll of life than starvation. It draws attention to the significant fact that in India alone of all countries at present within the British Commonwealth has such a tragedy taken place.

"The Federation considers that in order to ascertain the causes of the famine, to apportion responsibility and to prevent the recurrence of a similar calamity, a commission of inquiry should be appointed by the Government comprising independent responsible persons. It is further of the opinion that immediate measures should be taken to rehabilitate the stricken population and to prevent the spread of disease."

In the course of his speech, Pandit Kunzru charged the Provincial, Central and His Majesty's Governments with the responsibility for the famine. He was of the opinion that, if proper remedial steps had been taken long before, the magnitude of the tragedy would have been far less than what it had proved. Recalling his tour of the distressed areas, in Bengal, Pandit Kunzru gave a graphic account of the plight of the poor people in Bengal.

"A government which has completely failed to discharge its elementary duties" added Pandit Kunzru, "still claims to be the guardian of the masses and keeps all powers in its hands." He attacked the Provincial and Central Governments on their failure to keep the public for a long time informed of the reality of the Bengal situation. The result was that the public did not know of the coming calamity till October of this year. Millions of people were living so close to or living on the verge of starvation. It was a major disaster, and there was a great social task confronting them. The general standard of living of the people had to be raised and he was sure only a national Government could go ahead with plans to achieve appreciable results, within this generation. He was glad that H. E. the Viceroy was alive to the seriousness of the present situation but he ventured to suggest that only a national government could really tackle the problem. Concluding, Pandit Kunzru said that a subject India and a hungry India in conjunction with other nations in similar position, would always be a threat to world peace.

The resolution was supported by Mr. B. N. Gokhale and Dr. R. B. Khambatta and was carried.

Food Situation in India

Prof. M. D. Altekar moved the following resolution :

"The National Liberal Federation of India regrets that the Government of India failed to realise in time the gravity of the food situation throughout the country or to check the unprecedented rise to the prices of the necessities of life resulting in hardship and suffering among all classes of the population. It is strongly of opinion that His Majesty's Government should arrange for the import of foodstuffs into India as recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee until the shortage has been removed and prices have sufficiently fallen.

"The Federation considers that the present food situation in India, as well as the rapid growth in population, necessitates the early introduction of improved methods of agriculture, the bringing of cultivable land into cultivation and the raising of the low standards of living among the masses. The Federation regrets that when belated steps were taken by the Government of India to introduce rationing and to encourage a proper distribution of food, these attempts were hampered by the attitude adopted by some Provincial Governments. It urges the Government of India to enforce a policy of rationing in large towns with special attention to the provision of milk and milk products for mothers and children and to insist on an equitable distribution of food in the best interests of the masses. In this connection, the Federation views with concern the inadequate supply throughout the country not only of milk but also of other protective food such as eggs, fish and vegetables. In the opinion of the Federation, the food problem in India must be tackled at least in urban areas in its entirety as in England and elsewhere."

Criticising the food policy of the Government, Prof. M. D. Altekar said that the Government's policy was doing them greater harm than all the agitations of the Congress. There was deep dissatisfaction and Government must take firm and adequate measures to feed the population and keep them content.

Mr. G. C. Bhate and Mr. Gope Gurubux supported the resolution which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Casey's Appointment

Sir Raghunath Paranajpye moved the following resolution :

"The National Liberal Federation of India in opposed on principle to the appointment to posts in India of persons, however eminent they may be who are nationals of Dominions which do not place Indians and Europeans on a equal civic footing and for this reason disapproves the appointment of the Rt. Hon. Richard Casey as Governor of Bengal."

Speaking on the resolution, *Sir Raghunath Paranajpye* said that "this appointment is an insult to the self-respect of Indians. Every patriotic Indian should emphatically protest against it." He characterised it as an "injudicious appointment" and pointed out, "in none of the Dominions, Indians can occupy positions in government. And this comes at a time when the Indian Legislature has just passed a piece of legislation taking counter-measures against those Dominions that discriminate against Indian nationals". *Sir Raghunath* said in the Dominions before an incumbent was selected for a Governorship, the government of the province was consulted. The British Government should have seen to it that Indian opinion was not flouted in this matter.

Sir Vittal Chandavarkar, seconding the resolution asked : "Would Australia have accepted an Indian, however eminent and capable, say, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri—as the Governor-General of Australia?" "No", continued *Sir Vittal*, "the Australians would have opposed it not on merits, but on racial grounds". *Sir Vittal* referred to Mr. Casey's interview published in the press and characterised it as "the thin end of the wedge" as Mr. Casey seemed to be looking forward to more such appointments of Australians.

"AN INSULT AND HUMILIATION TO INDIA"

Sir Vittal continued, "It is true that Australia has sent food to India, but then India has sent cloth to Australia. It is entirely a business transaction". *Sir V. N. Chandavarkar* observed that two recent appointments made by the British Government were a departure from established practice. One was the appointment of a serving General to the Viceroyalty of India, whereas in the past it was the practice to appoint only outstanding men in Britain's public life to that high post. The second was the appointment of an Australian to the Governorship of Bengal. "This appointment is an insult and humiliation to India at a time when she is supposed to be on the threshold of Dominion Status".

The resolution was passed unanimously. The House then adjourned.

Third Day—Bombay—31st. December 1943

S. African Pegging Act

The twenty-fourth session of the All-India Liberal Federation concluded this evening after passing resolutions regarding South African Pegging Act, post-war reconstruction and responsible Government in Indian States and the appointment of an Indian Defence Member.

Mr. *Naushir Bharucha* moved a resolution strongly disapproving the continued anti-India agitation in South Africa, and in particular at the present time the recent "Pegging Act", which limits still further the already restricted rights of acquisition by South African Indians of immovable property." The resolution termed the "Pegging Act" a breach of the spirit of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 and declared such legislation "is particularly deplorable at a time when Indians are fighting for the freedom of all the peoples of the world from injustice and oppression." While opining that there would be no real solution of the problem of discrimination against Indian Nationals in South Africa or other British Dominions till India was a self-Governing country, the resolution offered the Liberal Federation's full support to the Government of India in "any retaliatory measures which they may think fit to adopt against the Union of South Africa or other Governments which do not accord full civic rights to Indian colonists." Mr. *Bharucha* said that Indians must depend on their own strength to protect their interests and not look to outsiders for it. In the meantime, Indians here must take every practicable measure to see that their self-respect was not sullied. *Sardar P. S. Sodhbans* seconded the resolution and *Major S. A. Paymaster* supported it.

Post-War Reconstruction

The Federation next adopted a lengthy resolution on post-war reconstruction. The resolution referring to the Committees appointed by the Government of

India and certain Provincial Governments for the purpose, emphasised that the main functions of such Committees would be to lay the foundations of a well-planned economy which would increase the cultivation of productive crops, improve agricultural methods, expand rural reconstruction and liquidate illiteracy. Among other essential requirements, the resolution continued, are the improvement and extension of communications and works of irrigation, the creation of an Indian mercantile marine, increased medical aid, the establishment of better health conditions, the provision of social services such as insurance against sickness and unemployment, and a general improvement in the standard of living.

The resolution further urged the Government to have a settled policy to assist in the establishment of new industries and in the development of the natural resources of the country; and pointed out the necessity, after the war, of the protection of nascent industries against foreign competition.

The Federation gave its general support to the scheme adumbrated by the Educational Adviser to the Government of India for a national system, and to the Committee appointed to frame proposals for the improvement of health conditions in India, but trusted that a reasonable time limit will be prescribed for the execution of their recommendations and that the very large sums of money would be forthcoming.

Sir Vittal Chandvarkar, moving the resolution, pointed out that India had no real control over her fiscal policy. If the Government wanted satisfactory work to be done in the direction, they should appoint a whole-time member with a separate independent department for post-war reconstruction.

Sir Vittal said that since the resignation of Mr. Aney, Mr. N. R. Sirkar and *Sir Homi Mody* from the Viceroy's Executive Council, all sense of joint responsibility had disappeared from that body, and its members at present were nothing more than heads of departments.

Rao Bahadur Sahasrabudhe, seconding the resolution, stressed the requirements of the rural areas and the villages. The resolution was passed.

Responsible Govt. in Indian States

Resolutions were also passed calling on the rulers of Indian States to declare as their policy the preparation of their people for full responsible Government, deploring the abolition of paid A. R. P. personnel and urging the appointment of an Indian Defence Member and the Indianisation of all grades of the Army, Navy and the Air Force.

The resolution on the States urged that, in view of the close ties existing between the people of Indian States and the people of British India and the impossibility of the former remaining unaffected by political progress in British India, the rulers of Indian States should declare as their policy the preparation of their people as rapidly as possible for full responsible Government. This should be carried out by extended facilities for mass education, extension of local Self-Government, the creation or enlargement of state assemblies and other representative institutions vested with responsibility as well as power. The resolution, at the same time, hoped that the subjects of the States would report only to constitutional methods for securing reforms and the redress of their grievances and assured them of the full support of the Federation.

Deploring the partial abolition of the paid A. R. P. staff, the Federation expressed the opinion that as the war with Japan was yet in its initial stages and enemy seacraft and aircraft could approach coastal towns and cities, the provision of a reasonably sufficient paid A. R. P. organisation would contribute to the maintenance of public morale in such areas. The Federation called upon the people, regardless of their political convictions, to co-operate in civil defence measures. The Federation in the third resolution urged that the defence forces of India should be organised on a fully national basis and urged that the large number of Indian Commissioned Officers already in the Defence Forces who had acquired valuable experience should be fully utilised to bring about complete Indianisation at an early date. The resolution added that the commissioned officers should not be demobilised after the war merely in order to restore the pre-war proportion between Indian and British officers. No non-Indian officer, it urged, should be appointed to any post so long as a suitable Indian officer was available. It also urged that the army should be recruited from all provinces and classes to a much greater extent than at present.

Sir Raghunath Paranjpye, who moved the resolution, declared that the defence of the country should really be at the forefront of all their post-war reconstruction plans.

Dr. G. S. Mahajani, speaking from experience as a member of the Interview Board for Recruitment to the Defence Forces, said that only about twenty-five per cent of the candidates who appeared before the Board were selected. He was convinced that this large amount of rejection was due not to any inferiority of our young men but to the fact that a right type of material was not forthcoming for recruitment. This hesitation on the part of the right type of young men to join the army was due partially to the uncertainty about their future after the war and partly to the creed of non-violence as preached by some. He asked the Government to give proper assurances to the young men of the country that they would be absorbed in other fields of employment and also by the creation of a standing army after the war.

All the three resolutions were passed unanimously.

After the election of new office-bearers for the coming year, the Federation accepted the invitation of *Sardar Sodhbans* to hold the next session of the Federation in Lahore.

The A. I. News-Paper Editors' Conference

Standing Committee—Bombay—14th. & 15th. July 1943

Growing Rigours of Censorship

Addressing the members of the Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, held on Bombay on the 14th. July 1943, Sir *Sultan Ahmed*, Information Member, stated that he wished to see this country maintain a free Press even in war time. He added that while he would be a watchful advocate of its privileges, he expected the Editors to be equally watchful in discharging their duties.

Mr. K. Srinivasan, President of the Conference, replying, said that he could not endorse the claim advanced by Sir *Sultan Ahmed* that the Press in India was as free from restrictions as the Press of any country could be in times of war. He criticised the censorship methods followed in India and said that the picture of the existence of a free Press in India had been a long-standing plank in the propaganda campaign of the officials and reached its climax when a party of Turkish journalists, after a conducted tour began to write articles telling the world of the paradise Indians lived in. The model which Indian Editors set before themselves was not, he said, the Turkish Press, but the British and American Press.

Sir Sultan Ahmed's Address

Addressing the session, Sir *Sultan Ahmed* said :

Let me first say how gladly I accepted your invitation to attend this meeting of the All-India Newspapers Editors' Conference and how much I value this opportunity of meeting you all. When I met you, gentlemen of the Press, in Delhi early in May, just after I had taken over charge of the Department of Information and Broadcasting, I asked for your co-operation and goodwill. I take the fact that you have invited me here to-day as a sign on your part that your co-operation and goodwill is extended to me. I also said, at the same time, that you could rely on having from me every help that I could render you in the discharge of your legitimate functions. I am here to-day to show that on my part I am ready to be as good as my word.

PROPOSAL FOR A PUBLICITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

You will first of all want to hear what I have been able to do so far to implement my undertaking to bring the Press in India into closer touch with the work of my Department. First, I am setting up a Publicity Advisory Committee, which will meet every six months to discuss generally matters affecting the work of the Department. Its nucleus is the members of the Standing Committee of the Central Legislature for the Department, and I am inviting other gentlemen to join us, so as to secure a body as representative as possible of both British India and the Indian States.

I am hoping also to get the help of prominent Editors and have issued invitations to your Chairman and some other editors and hope also to secure the services of two representatives of the Indian language press. I am also forming a

committee to be known as the Press Correspondents' Advisory Committee, which will, I hope, provide a forum in which matters, within the responsibility of my Department, which affect correspondents in their daily work, can be discussed. This Committee will meet once a month.

Most of my time since I took over charge of the Department has been spent in making myself acquainted with what is being done in it. My investigations have convinced me of one thing : whatever our shortcomings may be—and there are, no doubt, plenty of them.—there is nothing radically wrong either with the work of the Department as a whole or with the spirit which animates its officers. The thing which has struck me most is the extraordinary variety of the activities of the Department in its various branches. The more I study these activities the more I am surprised, not that mistakes have been made, but that they have not been far more frequent : not that I receive criticism, and I have received plenty, but that the criticisms have not been more numerous and more serious. During the past years, it has been the policy of the Department never to turn down a suggestion for a new activity and never to refuse to undertake a job which it has been asked to do. I do not think that the Department of Information and Broadcasting should follow any other policy, the result, in our case, has been that the volume and complexity of the work has expanded until a state has been reached when there are no longer a sufficient number of hours in the day for the superior staff of the Department to supervise, direct and co ordinate the existing work and, at the same time, to think and plan for the future. I have found, therefore, that my first business was to set about changing this and in my proposals I have the wholehearted support of the officers in the Department. I need not trouble you with the details of what we propose, but the general result of the reorganisation which is now in progress will be to relieve my senior officers, whose main business should be planning and co-ordination, of most of the routine business of administration, finance, staff and the rest. As soon as these arrangements are completed or earlier, if possible, I propose to undertake a survey of the work and organisation of each branch of the Department and to satisfy myself whether any changes are necessary in order to enable the work to be carried out efficiently and speedily.

Further details of changes (improvements, I hope), will no doubt be in due course extracted from us by your enterprising correspondents. You would not, I know, wish me to anticipate their discoveries.

AIM OF GOVT. PROPAGANDA

Now I should like to say a few words about Propaganda. Propaganda is a subject on which there are any number of opinions, but few experts—and even those experts are not necessarily known to the general public. They are not born, they are made. They are made by experience and experiment, and experience and experiment determine whether they are fit for their jobs. Dr. Goebbels has many advantages in a country where opinion is as strictly controlled as tyranny can effect, and where the headman's axe awaits those who are detected in the crime of listening-in to the outside world. But Dr. Goebbels has no monopoly of brains. We can beat him in this country. In many respects we have already checked, countered and foiled him and his fellows. If we are as determined on truth and freedom as he is on untruths and domination, we have already the material for beating him utterly. But if we adopt his mental attitude we shall fail, and we shall deserve to fail.

If there are many opinions on propaganda, it follows that any Government body responsible for propaganda becomes the target for many sorts of criticism. I welcome it. A not inconsiderable part of our work is concerned with the assessment and analysis of public reactions, and criticism should be helpful and not merely the result of chagrin, if some individual's views fail to find expression in our propaganda. I should like to point out two cardinal errors into which critics often unthinkingly fall. The first and, perhaps, the commonest error lies in supposing that because the methods and operation of propaganda may not be generally discernible, propaganda is not being carried on. When I hear people say, as I sometimes do, that we are doing no propaganda, I take that as an eloquent tribute to the propaganda that we are doing, for it means that indirect methods are effective. Of all departments of Government, almost the only one that does not seek publicity for itself is the department which is concerned with publicity. Indeed, the elements of the Department of Information and Broadcasting had been working since the beginning of the war two years before the Department was formed—working through the most difficult years that propaganda has been called upon to

face, quietly and without fuss and almost entirely without money. The foundations that were laid then were good foundations, and they included the devising of methods of counter-propaganda in which it would be proved that India gave the lead to other countries. Even quite recently reports on certain of our methods have been made to Washington to serve as models for the tackling of similar problems. But these are not things that we publish in the newspapers and proclaim from the house-tops. If we fell into that temptation our reputation might be temporarily enhanced but our work would be permanently impaired.

The second error is concerned with misapprehensions as to the purpose of propaganda. To compare the propaganda being done in this country with that reaching India from abroad *via* the enemy radio is interesting, but may be misleading: It is like comparing the performance of a fighter aircraft with that of a bomber. In defending ourselves, we do not necessarily use the same methods as the attacker. And there is a clear distinction—one of the few really clear distinctions in this complicated field—between the aggressive propaganda which we address to the enemy himself wherever we can get at him, and the propaganda, mis-called defensive, with which we seek to maintain the morale of our own people through good times and bad. To make this distinction and also to take into account, as we have to, the many differences of interests and grades of receptiveness in this great country of ours does not mean that we intend to follow, or have ever followed the totalitarian theories of our enemies: it does not mean that we intend to imitate, or have ever imitated, their practice of pursuing mutually contradictory lines for different audiences, of saying anything—false, half-true, or even occasionally true—for the sake of the immediate effect. These methods are not only immoral. They are, in the long run, ineffective—as we see now when so many of the enemy's lies are recoiling on his own head, with some assistance from ourselves. Propaganda should never have recourse to distortions of the truth. That was one of the three primary principles of those British propagandists who, at Crewe House in the last war, began the work whose effectiveness the Germans themselves have admitted. It is one of our principles also. We can do no less having in mind the things for which we are fighting.

The technical problems of getting the truth home to 390 million people are very much greater than the technical problems of inventing and disseminating appropriate falsehoods. The domestic propaganda of the Germans and the Japanese has—in theory at any rate—closed fields of operation, vast areas in which no other word is permitted to be spoken. In India we are in open competition with the enemy to whose broadcasts the private citizen is free to listen—and must remain so. We are in with the rumour-monger, innocent or malicious. There is an independent cinema industry and a Press at any rate as free from restrictions as the Press of any country can be in time of war. My Department is concerned to protect these privileges even though, in the totalitarian view, they may sometimes be regarded as hampering the prosecution of the war. We are concerned to protect them just because we are interested in truth, because it is truth for which we are working and fighting.

"NO SLACKENING OF EFFORT"

In the present state of the war, when the tide is fast turning in our favour and the enemy no longer has victories of which to boast, it may be argued that truth is having an easier time. We cannot say how long this period will last, but what we can say is, that through all the dark days, and they have been many and terrible, our propaganda based itself upon the truth, however, unpalatable. The belief that this country can face the truth has been vindicated, and that belief will continue to condition our work. It stands to reason that military setbacks make that work more difficult and military successes make it easier. But even in times of success there lurks a danger of which we have to beware. The fear of defeat we have, in large measure, been able to overcome. But there is such a thing as the fear of victory—the slackening of effort on the crest of the hill because men suddenly wonder what lies over the horizon. Our theme, simply stated, are these: that this war must be won: that, given sustained and unflinching effort it will be won: and finally, and perhaps most important, that it is worth winning. That, gentlemen, is what I stand for, that victory over the Axis Powers must be won, that it will be won if we do not slacken and that it is worth winning for India. And it is here that I want your help, indeed, I claim a right to your help, as good citizens. That this war is worth winning for India seems to me mere commonsense: for which of the blessings that we already have would survive an Axis victory, and which of the greater blessings which we confidently expect to have

would not be buried far beyond our reach by the defeat of the United Nations ? Consider President *Roosevelt's* Four Freedoms—freedom from want and from fear, freedom of religion and of speech. I grant these do not constitute any immediate political advance or a change in the present form of Government. But they are the bases of any form of stable government. Our endeavour should be to preserve the Four Freedoms in the strain and stress of total war. The only workable form of freedom is disinterested freedom which relates passion to necessity—the passion for freedom to the compelling necessity of the moment. If you and I achieve this, we shall have succeeded in harmonising the national urge with the swift-flowing current of the world outside. We are the link between the past and the future. Let us bequeath as richly as we have inherited. Let it not be said by posterity when they look back on these troublous times that we had to be dragged into unconsciousness in order that we might live to breathe the air of freedom.

ROLE OF THE PRESS

These are not platitudes, gentlemen, but hard facts, not always remembered even by the Fourth Estate. Your great concern is to preserve the Freedom of the Press. I believe you have it now : at least my own observation of what is written in the newspapers does not make me believe that whatever temporary handicaps the hard necessity of war may have imposed on your liberty, weigh very heavily on you. I am one with you in wishing to see this country maintain a free Press even in war-time. But if I am to help you, you must help me. Liberty for the Press, like liberty for anyone else, carries its duties as well as its privileges. I undertake to be a watchful advocate of your privileges. Do you be equally watchful in discharging your duties. ? If this is understood you and I will get on famously.

If I have reminded you of the duties of the Press, believe me I have done so in the friendliest spirit and it is mainly because I dread any slackening in the will to win. Here are hard times ahead of us before our country is finally freed from the threat of attack, before China is liberated, before the Japanese are driven back to their own island. In this task the soldiers of India will play a prominent part. We civilians can play our part also by strengthening the determination of the country, so that the spirit of the soldiers may remain indomitable and the courage of the people at home undiminished. Here is a great task awaiting you, when you could influence public opinion in a moment of grave crisis. Confidence and stead-fastness are with difficulty sustained on an empty stomach and there are many people in India to-day who cannot get enough of the necessities of life and have to pay a wicked price for what little they can get. I can assure you that my colleague in the Government of India fully realise the seriousness of the situation. We have not yet succeeded in solving the problem of maldistribution here, of real shortage there, of inflated prices everywhere. Mistakes have been made, as you, gentlemen, have not been slow to point out. It is your duty to criticise but have you no other duty ? I think you have. The most perfect arrangements by the most perfect of governments will not succeed in bringing sufficient food to everyone at a fair price as long as hoarding, profiteering and black markets are rampant. These practices are anti-social ; they amount to war by a section of the community on the community as a whole. In other countries they have been killed by public opinion, by co operation of the citizens and the Press with the Government. Here is your chance, as I have said, to show your patriotism and to demonstrate the influence of the Press. I believe that in a month you could, if every paper in India took up the crusade, make hoarders, profiteers and operators in the black market so detested by their fellows that they would cease their evil ways. My Department will do its best, but I believe that it is in the Press that the citizens of this country, who are in distress, can find their most effective champion. Will you cry out day by day against those practices until you have eradicated them ? Believe me, you will never have a better opportunity of earning the gratitude of your countrymen. I cannot think that you will refuse."

Mr. K. Srinivasan's Reply

Mr. K. Srinivasan, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the All-India News-paper Editors' Conference, replying to Sir *Sultan Ahmed*, said :—

"On behalf of the All-India News-paper Editors' Conference, let me extend a cordial welcome to you to this meeting of the Standing Committee of Editors and express our appreciation of your desire to speak to us on the work connected with the Department of Information and Broadcasting. This department, much to the regret of everybody, has been functioning, ever since the lamented death of Sir *Akbar Hydari*, without a head ; of course leaving out of account the few days Sir

C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar was in charge. I am recalling this fact just to remind ourselves that this portfolio, which is always looked upon as of vital importance in all well-ordered countries in times of war, came into being quite a long time after the war had begun, and further had the misfortune to be left to drift without the steering gear. The supervision and the working of the Department, as we all know, came to be placed under the all-pervading Home Department, the natural legatee of all residuary responsibility—with what result we are all familiar with.

STRINGENT CENSORSHIP OF A POLITICAL NATURE

"The function of the Department of Information and Broadcasting were rapidly converted into a propaganda machine for launching a campaign of misrepresentation of India's leaders in Allied countries and stringent censorship was imposed on all news of a political nature. The latest act in the series is the censorship imposed on the writings of *Mr. Louis Fischer*. May I ask *Sir Sultan Ahmed* what assurance he will give us so that we may pursue our work as editors undisturbed by such irritating orders and instructions? We hope *Sir Sultan* will not tell us that it is somebody else's responsibility and that he should not be expected to stand surety for another department. Different spheres of responsibility were created for efficiency; but it appears as though they are now intended to be put forward as excuses for a policy of do-nothing! A blatant instance, of recent occurrence, is the manner in which the Department of Information and Broadcasting dealt with the question of celebrating the Tunisian victory. Editors of newspapers were asked to issue a special supplement featuring the success of the Allies in Tunisia, and when we inquired of the Chief Press Adviser whether he would get the necessary permission from the allied department of Civil Supplies for the issue of necessary permits to use newsprint for that purpose, the request was turned down; but, what is more, we were asked to take a day off by declaring a holiday and thus utilise that day's paper supply for the supplement! You can not expect co-operation from us on these terms.

PROPOSAL FOR ADVISORY BOARD NOT ATTRACTIVE

"*Sir Sultan* has given us to-day a picture, in faint: one though it be, of what his plans are. I must be frank enough to say that the Publicity Advisory Board which is to be set up shortly does not appear to be attractive to us and I would request *Sir Sultan* to leave editors out of it altogether. The Standing Committee of the Editors meets at least four times a year, and I shall invite *Sir Sultan* to attend its sittings, and exchange views with us whenever he considers it necessary. As he knows, it is a responsible and representative body and I am sure he will find it of greater advantage to contact editors here, rather than the mixed gathering of all talents which is to meet once in six months.

'You have made a passing reference to what you have described as an independent cinema industry and a free Press in India. You have claimed that the Indian Press is as free from restrictions as the Press of any country can be in times of war. I am sure, you do not expect us here to endorse that view. This picture of the existence of a free press in India has been a long-standing plank in the propaganda campaign of the officials in India and reached its climax when a party of Turkish journalists, after a conducted tour in India, began to write a series of articles telling the world what a paradise we live in. It is necessary to remind these friends that the model we have set before us is not the Turkish Press, but the British and American Press who know of no restrictions except those imposed for security reasons.

"As regards the Cinema industry in India, from my knowledge of the conditions obtaining in the South, the film Industry is passing through a crisis owing to the unjustifiably drastic cut imposed on the length of the films, and it is to be hoped that the recent visit of *Mr. Thapar* to Madras will result in bringing relief to the film producers in South India.

GROWING RESTRICTIONS ON THE PRESS

"*Sir Sultan* has put in a strong plea for the dissemination of truth as the supreme aim for which Allies are fighting the war, and condemned with unmistakable emphasis the practice of pursuing contradictory lines for different audiences. I would suggest to him to study the records of his own department, particularly during the last twelve months and see for himself the protests which have been made by Special Correspondents in Delhi and the Editors' Standing Committee against the increasing rigours of censorship of both incoming and outgoing messages. With *Sir Sultan's* dictum that propaganda should never

have recourse to distortions of the truth, we, in the Standing Committee, have no hesitation in associating ourselves.

In conclusion let me say this—It has been recognised in all quarters that the Press in India has shown remarkable restraint during these difficult years of war and internal strife. So long as the department of which Sir Sultan has recently assumed charge will strive to put into practice the high principles to which he has given expression, he may be sure of our unstinted and helpful co-operation and support and thereby fulfil our responsibilities to the public."

Resolutions—2nd. Day—Bombay—15th. July 1943

Advertisements in the Press

The Standing Committee of the All India Newspaper Editors' Conference adjourned *sine die* at 6 p.m. to-day after concluding two-day session.

At the sitting after lunch, the Standing Committee discussed the reference to it from the Central Press Advisory Committee regarding the *Hindustan Times*, the revision of the Bombay Agreement, and the Publicity Advisory Board planned by the Member for Information and Broadcasting on all of which unanimous resolutions were adopted.

The Standing Committee also adopted the following resolutions :

"1. This Committee notes the growing feeling among sections of the public against the tendency in some newspapers to publish a class of advertisement which border on the obscene and offend against public decency and morals on subjects such as sex, birth-control, female disorders, etc., and is of the opinion that the majority of advertisements of this class appearing in both English and Indian language newspapers should be entirely eliminated and the language in the case of the others overhauled. The Committee, therefore, advises the Press of this country to eliminate all such advertisements or alter the language where necessary in the interests of the public good.

"The Standing Committee further appoints a Committee composed of the President, Mr. F. W. Bustin and Mr. Syed Mahamad from whom newspapers in doubt regarding particular advertisements may seek guidance.

"2. In view of the fact that the publication of cartoons is coming increasingly into vogue, the Committee is concerned to point out that it is in the interests of the Press to maintain high standards and to avoid cartoons and caricatures likely to lower the prestige of the Press.

"3. The Standing Committee congratulates Mr. Amritlal D. Sheth, editor of *Janmabhoomi* on his successful appeal to the High Court against the order of the Bombay Government forfeiting the security of the *Janmabhoomi* for publishing Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee's letter of resignation.

In the two vacancies on the Standing Committee the following were elected : Messrs. Ram Gopal Maheswaria of Navabharat and Baldev Das of Sansar.

The Committee adjourned after passing a vote of thanks to the President and the Committee of the Indian Merchants' Chamber for their kind hospitality.

Sir Sultan Ahmed's Assurance

Sir Sultan Ahmed, addressing the Standing Committee for a second time, after the President had replied to his address, said : "I assure you when I leave this room, I walk out a wiser man. It is always a privilege to be with editors—editors who have got experience, who have got knowledge of the country, who know the reactions of the people towards matters in which Government may be interested. I am, however, disappointed that Mr. Srinivasan has asked me to leave editors out of the Publicity Advisory Board. I regret I cannot comply with this request, I must insist on their co-operation. I am glad to say that the first editor, who responded to my invitation and accepted it is Mr. Srinivasan (cheers). I have said and I maintain that the restrictions on the Press here are not greater than, indeed in my opinion, much less, in some countries, at any rate during times of war. I can however give you this assurance that I will zealously guard your interests because your interests are mine.

Continuing, Sir Sultan Ahmed said that his idea was mainly to bring the Press closer to the Government of India. "If there are differences may be ours, may be yours, these differences should be resolved. While I admit you are reasonable, you will also give me credit for being reasonable. You have said that you are in agreement with restrictions imposed for security reasons. If you admit that, I assure you, you and I are in full agreement."

Standing Committee—New Delhi—6th. November 1943

PROTEST AGAINST ORDER ON "HITAVADA"

The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, held in New Delhi on the 6th. November 1943, passed the following resolutions :

"The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference records its emphatic protest against the action of the Central Provinces Government in demanding from the Editor of the *Hitavada* the source of his information in regard to the publication of the Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government as an unwarranted interference with the well-established convention governing the relations between an editor and his correspondents.

"The Standing Committee notes with satisfaction that in their communique issued on October 22, 1943, the Government of India recognize the convention that the relations between an editor and his correspondents are confidential, but regret that they are prepared to concede it only to the extent that "in all ordinary circumstances this convention honoured by time and usage" should not be disturbed. The Standing Committee further objects to the use of the Defence of India Rules to compel an editor to disclose the source of his information and requests the Government to withdraw the order against the editor of the *Hitavada*.

"The Standing Committee congratulates Mr. A. D. Mani on the courage with which he has vindicated the highest tradition of the profession."

The above resolution was moved by Sir Francis Low, seconded by Mr. Brelvi and supported by Mr. Ian Stephens.

Moved by Mr. S. A. Brelvi, seconded by Mr. Siddiqui and supported by Mr. Sahni, the following resolution was passed :

"The Standing Committee takes exception to the action of the Bihar Government in demanding from certain Patna newspapers the source of information of report about the possibility of the transfer of the present Chief Secretary, Bihar Government, to the Board of Revenue."

PROTEST AGAINST ORDER ON SIND PAPER

On the motion of Mr. Devadas Gandhi, supported by Mr. B. Shiva Rao, the following resolution was passed :

"The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference feel that the order served under the Indian Press Emergency powers demanding security from the *Sind Observer* by ignoring the unanimous recommendation of the Provincial Advisory Committee violates the assurance given by the Government of India that reasonable and legitimate editorial comment could not be actionable and is of the opinion that the action of the Sind Government apart from being unjustified on merits, was opposed to the spirit of the agreement between the Government of India and the Editors' Conference. The Standing Committee of the A. I. N. E. C. therefore request the Government of India to draw the attention of the Sind Government to the understanding governing editorial comment and to request them to withdraw the order against the *Sind Observer*."

The Chamber of Princes.

Nineteenth Session New Delhi—14th. October 1943

H. E. The Viceroy's Address

Over seventy Rulers of States and their heirs-apparent were present in their full traditional regalia when H. E. the Viceroy inaugurated the nineteenth session of the Chamber of Princes at New Delhi on the 14th. October 1943. The following is the text of the Viceroy's speech :—

"Your Highnesses,

"I am very glad to meet Your Highnesses again, and to have this opportunity before I lay down my present office of saying these words of farewell to you. I realise only too well how great the inconvenience is which many of Your Highnesses have suffered in visiting Delhi in the present difficulties of accommodation and transport, and I am the more grateful to you all for your presence, in numbers unprecedented since the inauguration of the Chamber, here to-day.

"This, the 19th meeting of the Chamber of Princes, since its inauguration in 1921, is the last of six such meetings over which I have had the honour of presiding and, owing to various difficulties which prevented our assembling as usual in March, has had to be postponed up to the very verge of my departure from India. But I am glad to think that since we last met, the face of the war has changed in a manner that even the most optimistic of us could hardly have hoped for. To-day we can look back on the great and splendid achievements of the fighting forces in every theatre of war through the months that have passed since we last came together. The great changes that have taken place, the outstanding victories of the Allied arms, have brought us very perceptibly nearer to the goal we are all so anxious to reach. And they have brought us perceptibly nearer, too, to the point at which the investigation and the solution of post-war problems is a matter of immediate and imperative necessity.

"Let me first pay tribute to the memory of those who are no longer with us. Since our last meeting six members of the Chamber have passed away—Their Highnesses of Bikaner, Jhalawar, Ajaigarh and Jhabua, the Raja of Khilchipur and the Raja of Kurundwad (Junior) who was a representative member. His Highness the Chancellor will be voicing our tribute to these departed Princes. I will only add to what I have already said this morning about His Highness of Bikaner, a special word of deep regret at the untimely demise of Highness of Jhalawar, a Prince of exceptional promise selflessly devoted to the discharge of his high responsibilities. Rarely, if ever, did he fail to attend the meetings of this Chamber, and his absence to-day leaves a gap which we all deplore and I have just heard with very great regret of the death of His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin whose State I had the pleasure of visiting less than two months ago and who had done so much in the short period of his Rule for the good of his people.

"To those who have succeeded to rulership and membership of this Chamber, I offer a most cordial welcome. To His Highness of Bikaner we confidently look to carry on the great services rendered to the Order of Princes by his illustrious father. It is a pleasure, too, to see here to-day for the first time the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior and Their Highnesses of Dhrangadhara, Manipur and Jhabua, also the Rajas of Baghat and Kurundwad (Senior) and the Rao of Jigni who have been elected as representative members since our last meeting. Nor must I omit to mention the recent admission to membership of the Raja of Shahpura, the Nawab of Kurwai and the Rajas of Talcher, Kalsia and Phaltan, four of whom we are glad to welcome in person to-day.

"I have spoken already of the magnificent progress that has been made in every theatre of the war by the Allied arms, progress so profoundly encouraging to all of us who have been through the dark days through which we have lived since the beginning of the war. Much still lies before us. It will be a mistake to underestimate the strength and the determination of the forces that are opposed to us. We may yet have many anxious months before victory is achieved. But it is a happiness to me before I leave India to be able to feel that circumstances have so amply justified the guarded optimism which I permitted myself in my previous address to this Chamber. And it is a happiness to me, too, to be able with pride and gratitude for the last time to review the services which have been rendered by the Princes of India in this titanic struggle.

WAR EFFORT

"Naturally, my thoughts turn first to the sphere of active operations and I would at the outset warmly thank and congratulate those of Your Highnesses who have been able to hearten and encourage the troops by personal visits to the various fronts. I would wish, too, to pay a special tribute to the invaluable assistance in the war effort that has been given by His Highness the Chancellor. Not only has His Highness rendered service of real value as one of the representatives of India at the War Cabinet. He has taken advantage of his absence from India to perform sterling service as one of the spokesmen of this great country overseas. And he has spared no pains to acquaint himself in the fullest detail with the organisation of war effort in the United Kingdom. I hope that in the course of this session, we shall hear from his Highness himself some account of his experiences. But, for myself, I would like to add my testimony to the value of his contribution, the importance of the contacts he has made, the encouragement that his visit has given to the troops and to the munition workers that he has visited.

"The Indian States forces have taken full advantage of the opportunities that have come to them to win fresh distinction on the battlefield. Comparisons are rash. And such distinction is of course largely dependent upon opportunity. But

I would mention the gallant record of the Kashmir Mountain Battery, the First Patiala Infantry, the Jind Infantry, the Jodhpur Sarder Infantry, two Jaipur Battalions, the Tripura Rifles and the Tehri-Garhwal and Malerkotla Sappers and Miners. Nor should I fail to record my gratitude for the manner in which the States as a whole have adopted the scheme devised to raise the standard of efficiency among the higher ranks of their forces. I realise and appreciate the difficulties that may on occasion confront Your Highnesses in these and other connected matters. But I know too that you on your part will recognise that the first duty of the Military Adviser-in-Chief is to devise schemes to rectify such deficiencies as come to notice under the stress and strain of war. A new scheme for the exchange of officers, and another for providing advanced training for States units will, I understand, shortly be put forward, I am convinced that Your Highnesses will continue to view such proposals with sympathy and realism, and that I and my successor can look for your full co-operation over them.

"Nor has the active aid of the States in the actual war zones been confined to combatant units. Invaluable assistance, at a time of very real and pressing need, has been lent by the Indian States in providing labour units for the construction of roads and aerodromes. Our gratitude is due in very special measure to the great States of the south, whose contributions, in this sphere have been, and continue to be, outstanding. From Travancore and Cochin, over 700,000 men have travelled north to carve out roads to be traversed by the fighting soldiers, and in doing so to face the perils of disease. Those who have laid down their lives side by side with the fighting man in the fever infested belts in which so much has had to be done, have sacrificed themselves as truly as any fighting soldier for their motherland, and we salute their memory today.

"But it is not only to humble homes that the war has brought sad and untimely bereavements. I spoke last year of an heir-apparent who had met his death in the course of his duties as an officer of the Indian Air Force. Since then a similar blow has fallen upon two other members of this Chamber and I feel sure that Your Highnesses would wish me to tender deep sympathy and condolences to the Raja of Sangli and the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj.

"For the rest, contributions and offers of personal services, aircraft, buildings, labour, watercraft, machinery, training facilities and medical aid, donations and gifts of every sort and description have continued to pour in from Indian States in an ever-winding stream. I cannot speak too highly of the magnificent response consistently made by the Indian States to the urgent needs of this critical time: They have shown unstinted generosity and co-operation: thanks to their help, great aerodromes, strategical projects of every kind, have sprung up in the territory of the Indian States. Facilities of every kind have been most readily granted not only to British and Indian forces, but to the forces of our Allies: and in particular, certain States, at the cost of wide stretches of famous forests most carefully guarded in the past, have helped immensely in the training of men in the new science of jungle warfare.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN STATES AND BRITISH INDIA

"I referred in my last address to the steadily expanding scope of measures to achieve the maximum co-ordination of effort between the States and British India. Instances of such co-operation could be multiplied indefinitely and there is no time to catalogue them to-day. But I would make mention of one notable incident in which a group of hostile agents were arrested with most commendable promptitude almost immediately after they had landed from an enemy submarine on the shores of an Indian State. Further and most valuable demonstrations of this united front, as between the States and Provinces are to be found in the more prosaic but not less vital sphere of wartime legislation, where States have most willingly and comprehensively applied to their territories the British Indian Ordinances and other arrangements devised to meet the various emergencies which have been constantly arising.

"Let me add one further instance in which the States and their subjects are making an important contribution to our resources. The Indian Post and Telegraphs Department was, up to the outbreak of the war, functioning on commercial lines as a self-supporting organisation making no contribution to the general revenues of British India. Such an arrangement is of course only fair to the States who by entering, as the vast majority of them have done, into postal unity with British India, undertook no liability to submit to indirect taxation in the form of surcharges on the normal economic rates for the transmission of letters and telegrams. The exigencies of war time finance have, however, compelled the

Government of India, following in this matter the lead of the Government of the United Kingdom, to raise the postal and telegraphic rates for the express purpose of making a substantial surplus available as a contribution towards war expenditure. It was, of course, impracticable to confine this process to British India, and it is with deep appreciation that I learn that the States are pressing no objection to the additional financial burden which it places on themselves and on their subjects. The financial value of that burden cannot immediately be precisely computed. But given the areas and the populations affected, it cannot but be substantial. And its acceptance is yet another and a most valuable voluntary contribution by the Indian States towards the prosecution of the war.

COMBATING FOOD CRISIS AND INFLATION

"The same uniform and wholehearted co-operation has been shown in regard to those grim problems of the war which have been so distressingly prominent during the current year—food, cloth, inflation. In our efforts to combat the food crisis we have had the benefit of full association at every stage with accredited representatives of the States. Those who have a surplus have freely placed it at our disposal. Those in deficiency have, of course, participated in the common resources. I could, but wish that those resources had proved more adequate to their needs. I have particularly in mind the States of Travancore and Cochin which, deprived of their normal supplies of Burma rice, have borne a particularly heavy burden. I would like to pay a tribute both to the efforts made by the States governments concerned, with which I was able to acquaint myself at first hand during my recent visit to South India, to cope with a situation so distressing, and to the patience and fortitude of the population so sorely tried. All over India, the States have lent full support to the "grow more food" campaign. I would beg them to continue and if possible to increase that support. The need is great—we must leave nothing undone not merely to banish the threat of famine, but to accumulate those reserves of food that are so important a guarantee for the future.

"To those States of Rajputana where sudden floods have recently caused such grave loss of life and property, our sympathy and our admiration of the courage and energy with which all concerned have applied themselves to the work of remedy and repairs go out in full measure.

"In the steps that have had to be taken to remedy the shortage of cloth, there is the same record of friendly helpfulness. Many important centres of the textile industry are situated in Indian States, and I am deeply grateful to the States concerned for the manner in which they have placed the products of their looms at the disposal of the Central Government, often at no small sacrifice to themselves.

"Inflation is one of the gravest problems that faces us to-day. It is a problem in the handling of which the States and British India are equally concerned, and in which they have a common interest. Action to combat inflation is essential, for it is a threat to every one of us, and to India as a whole. I realise that anti-inflationary measures present a complex problem in the case of the States, having regard to the varying conditions of their fiscal arrangements and their relative backwardness in industrial development. But I know that Your Highnesses share my view that the question is one that must be resolutely tackled. And I look for valuable results from the discussions that I myself have had with some of you on this topic, discussions which my Political Adviser is, on my behalf, continuing and developing during this week. I would like to take this opportunity to make it clear beyond any question that such checks and prohibitions as it has been necessary to apply are based solely upon the present overriding need to conserve and regulate the resources of the country as a whole, so that the output of essential supplies should not be curtailed or disturbed for the benefit of local or personal interests. There is not, and there cannot be, any question of there being designed to stifle the birth, or the progress of industrial development in the Indian States.

"Matters such as these, and others too numerous to mention, will of course come under review in connection with post-war development and reconstruction. The plans of the Central Government for dealing with that great problem are already well advanced. I am glad to be able to assure Your Highnesses that they contain full provision for associating your States with its numerous ramifications, and I am glad too to think that many of your ablest ministers are included in the various committees that are being set up. Public opinion must inevitably take the closest interest in these activities of reconstruction.

"I am the more grateful for the response of so many States to the advice which I offered to you at our last session in regard to the National War Front movement. That movement was established when the war outlook was dark and

threatening. As the intervening months have passed, it has developed into a public organisation concerned with every aspect of public morale. It is some measure of Your Highnesses' support of this vital work that in fifteen months 287 States have brought War Front Organisations into being. That is a response of which the States have every right to be proud and, as the founder of the movement, I congratulate Your Highnesses on it. And, though the name of the War Front Movement must ultimately die, the spirit and work behind it should live. For it contains tremendous potentialities for establishing means by which the good in man and in life may be more widely known and the things that are evil challenged and destroyed.

HELP TO FOREIGN REFUGEES

"Before I leave the dominating topic of the war, I would add a few words of appreciation of the generosity shown by so many of Your Highnesses towards refugees from other countries whose sufferings have been immensely greater than ours. In particular, I have in mind your aid towards establishing a temporary refuge in India for a great number of Polish children. Here again, I must refer to the outstanding energy and personal interest, and to the most generous personal aid, which has been given by His Highness the Chancellor. What he has done for Polish children will long be remembered, not only by those children to whom his kindness has been so real, but by the great Polish nation. I should mention also the similar settlement in the Kolhapur State where facilities have been most readily and generously provided and where the personal sympathy of Her Highness the Maharani Regent has been of the utmost value.

"Time presses and I have much to say on matters of even greater importance, but I could not forgive myself if I failed to-day to thank Your Highnesses for your lavish support in two matters unconnected with the war but specially near to the hearts of Her Excellency and myself. I refer of course to my wife's anti-tuberculosis campaign and to the activities of the All-India Cattle Show Society. I cannot over-estimate my sense of the importance of the anti-tuberculosis campaign. It is, I am certain, of profound significance to the future of this country. And it is a very real happiness to my wife, who has spared no effort for it during her time here, and to myself, to think that we leave India with the campaign against this scourge so firmly established. The support of the All-India Cattle Show Society by more than sixty States has been continuous and invaluable. I am grateful in particular that it should have been greater even than before in this current year in spite of the other numerous demands on your resources. I feel certain that the work of the Society merits in the fullest degree the friendly co-operation of Your Highnesses and that it responds to instincts deeply rooted in every great agricultural country. The fight against tuberculosis, the struggle to improve India's cattle and so the condition of the peasant and the countryside, are very close to the hearts of both of us, and my wife and I, I can assure you, will in the days after we have left India, continue to take the liveliest and most vivid interest in both.

"I turn now to a different field, and I would ask Your Highnesses to bear with me while I indulge in some reflections on more basic and possibly more controversial matters, reflections prompted by 7½ years of such intimate association with the intricate and sometimes baffling problems presented by the Indian States and by the real and sincere interest which I have always taken in them and in their welfare. It has been suggested to me more than once that the immense aggregate importance of these States as an element in the Indian continent, and their vital concern in the solution of all Indian problems, have not always been fully appreciated.

"I cannot believe that that can be the case, or that any well-informed observer can fail to realise the vast area which the Indian States occupy, the size of their population, their great resources, the outstanding place which they hold in the history of India, and the extent to which the future of this great sub-continent must be, and is, of immediate and profound concern to them. But the very size and importance of the Indian States as a whole makes the problems that Your Highnesses, and the Crown Representative of the day, have to face the more significant.

THE STATES AND FEDERATION

"Your Highnesses have often heard me refer both in my previous addresses to this Chamber, and in other places, to my own view of the significance and value of the Federal Scheme which was the coping-stone of the Act of 1935. There was, no doubt, much that could be said in point of detail against that scheme. Equally as

I have said before, much could have been and can be urged against any scheme that can be devised for the constitutional future of India. But just as I have always believed that the Federal Scheme was the best answer that could at that time have been devised for the problems of British India, equally, it was and is, my sincere belief that such a scheme is the best answer from the point of view of the Indian States and form the point of view of India as a whole.

"Events beyond our control have necessitated changes in our plans, and to some extent have altered the circumstances with which we have to deal and in which we have to build. But speaking here to Your Highnesses to-day for the last time, I wish to reaffirm my faith and confidence in the Federal ideal, and in the contribution which the realisation with general support of that ideal, whatever adjustments might prove necessary in regard to particular aspects of it, would make to Indian unity and to the constitutional future of India.

And when I speak of unity, I need not emphasise to Your Highnesses the importance of all of us standing together in the conditions of the modern world. It is very difficult for units, however large, whatever their form of Government, whatever their resources, to exist save in relation to, and as part of, a larger whole. The bonds that link units one to another may be light as gossamer. But they exist : they are there and their strength and their significance cannot be denied. If that is true of a continent as large as Europe, it is true, I am certain, equally of this great sub-continent of India : and inside that sub-continent it holds good equally especially when common interests are so largely involved of the Indian States. That that unity is wholly consistent with the survival and the orderly development of the Indian States, with their distinguished history ; with their special relations with the crown so fully recognised, based as they are on treaties, sanads, can make a great and useful contribution to India's future. I never have doubted, and I do not doubt to-day. It must be our business to see in what way that contribution can best be made, and what best can be its character.

"I spoke just now of survival accompanied by development. The juxtaposition of these two words is of deep and vital significance, as I know that Your Highnesses fully realise. There have been great developments of recent years, profound changes, new forces, new ideas, a new attitude of mind in the international field. All these facts have to be taken into account. And in the face of them, you and I, who have to live in the world of to-day, must think and act realistically. It would be an injustice to Your Highnesses were I to assume that any reasonable man amongst you would deny that the Crown's obligations to protect carry with them equally binding responsibilities to ensure, if need be, that what is protected continues to be worthy of protection. On the contrary, I am glad to think that that most important proposition is widely accepted among you. I can claim during the period of my Viceroyalty to have spared no effort to assist Your Highnesses to give effect to the principles that underlie it. And I should indeed have regarded it not only as a dereliction of my duty but as a grave disservice to the Princely Order had I in the least degree relaxed my efforts to do so.

MERGER OF SMALL STATES

"When I last addressed this Chamber, I referred to three particular directions towards which those efforts were, in consultation and co-operation with Your Highnesses, being exerted. I spoke firstly of the decisive necessity in regard to the smaller States, of some form of co-operative measures to secure a standard of administrative efficiency which is beyond their individual resources. That progress has since continued with encouraging results—particularly in Eastern India, from which area I am glad to see so many rulers present to-day. I congratulate them on what they have been able to achieve and I look forward with confidence to its consolidation and extension. In other areas too progress has been made and new ideas are afoot but I have become increasingly conscious of the difficulties which arise, not so much from any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the rulers concerned as from the nature of the foundations on which they have to build. I devoutly wish that these difficulties could, before my departure from India, have been surmounted by the formulation and application of general principles acceptable to all concerned. But in matters so delicate, undue haste might well have defeated the object in view. I have had to content myself therefore with giving instructions that the progress hitherto achieved and the difficulties thereby revealed shall within the next few weeks be systematically reviewed and considered by my advisers, so soon as can conveniently be arranged, my successor may be able to initiate discussions either with the Standing Committee or with selected representatives of the category of States principally concerned, from which discussions a clear plan of

action may emerge. I appeal most earnestly to Your Highnesses to co-operate wholeheartedly in these processes. For I regard them, and I cannot emphasise this too strongly as being literally of vital importance for the vast majority of you.

"Your Highnesses will realise that measures such as these to which I now refer, involving as they do a certain measure of sacrifice on the part of those small units to which I have mentioned, do at the same time represent a most valuable contribution to the improvement of administration, and to the removal of criticism, consistently with the survival and development, by means of co-operation among themselves or under the aegis of larger States, of the smaller states affected. The sacrifices involved, as I have observed to Your Highnesses on previous occasions, are an inevitable accompaniment of the co-operative method. But I feel no shadow of doubt that they are justified in terms of the benefits involved, whether we test those benefits by the improvement of the standard of administrative services and amenities or by wider political considerations. A heavy obligation rests upon us all. And that obligation makes it difficult—and I am certain Your Highnesses agree with me to view with equanimity conditions in which, owing to the smallness of the area, or of the resources of individual States, it may be impossible to secure the application of modern standards of justice, or of administration, to the inhabitants of the area concerned.

"I would add that the line of argument which I have been following in regard to small States is no less applicable to the Jagirs and Thikanas which, though forming an integral part of certain States, still maintain some semblance of jurisdictional and administrative machinery. Let me make it clear beyond any question that the times are no longer propitious for Jagirdars and Thakurs, who seek to assert or perpetuate a semi-independence wholly incompatible with their limited resources, and so, inevitably harmful to the interests of the inhabitants of the areas concerned.

ADMINISTRATION PROBLEMS

"I spoke also at the last session of this Chamber of a scheme for safeguarding standards of administration, particularly after the period of a ruler's minority, by the application of formal constitutional methods for the transaction of State business. I referred too to the difficult and delicate problem of determining what proportion of a State's revenue can appropriately be earmarked for the use of the ruler and his family, and what precisely are the items which should legitimately come within the scope of civil lists and privy purses. Here, again, I am denied the satisfaction of seeing final decisions reached during the period of my Viceroyalty.

"I deeply regret that that should be the case. For the issue is one of prime importance. And it is one in which close and critical interest is taken not only in India, but far outside the borders of this country. I do, therefore, sincerely trust that in regard to it an early solution, and one that may command general commendation not only in this country, but outside, may be forthcoming. The recent discussions between representative Princes and my advisers have been of real value, and I confidently hope that they will shortly yield those solid and generally acceptable results to which I have just referred.

"I would like to take this occasion to say how much as Crown Representative I value the advice and the frank expression of views of representative Princes in matters such as this. For the decisions that have to be taken by the Crown Representative are often grave ones, and he will, I am sure, at all times be anxious to be assured, before he reaches a conclusion that he is fully cognisant of the views of the Princely Order on matters so directly concerning members of that Order and of the considerations that weigh with them.

"Your Highness will realise, as I do, that the problems that face you today are far from simple, and that there lies ahead a period in which problems more difficult still may have to be confronted. If the best interests of the States, the best interests of India, are to be safeguarded, we must be at pains to face the facts and be willing, even at the cost of sacrifice to make such adjustments as the turn of world events makes necessary. I know from my own extensive journeyings among the States to what an extent certain Indian States have become an example and an inspiration to other parts of India. It must be our object to ensure that that shall be the case in every area. And, indeed, it is essential in the interests of the State and in the interests of their survival that they should not fall below modern standards of administration in any way. I need not assure Your Highnesses as I talk of those difficult and delicate matters that to the extent that I, or my representatives on my instructions, have had to take a particular line in regard to co-operative measures and the like, I have been concerned solely and it is

the true and legitimate function in this sphere of the Crown Representative—to awaken the indifferent to consciousness of the dangers that threaten them, to point out deficiencies, to suggest remedies to co-ordinate individual initiatives for the benefit of all but you may be certain that at all times the underlying consideration that has governed any decisions that I have had to take, and that will, I am sure, govern such decisions as may fall to be taken by my successors, is that the Indian States shall fit themselves to play that great and positive part in the development of India as a whole which their importance and their history justifies : and that it is to the interest of the Princely order that such weaknesses as may to-day exist, whether in administration or organisation, shall be eliminated with the minimum of delay.

"I would not like to conclude my observations to-day without again thanking Your Highnesses and the Princely Order for the invaluable help that you have given to the war effort and without thanking you, too, for the help that I have had in the efforts I have made while I have been Viceroy to further the modernisation of administration in the States, and for the help you have given me on so very many critical issues directly affecting the well-being and the future of your States. These are testing times—all of us realise that. But Your Highnesses represent great and distinguished traditions and the Indian States do as a whole represent a great potentiality for good in the times that lie before us.

"On the eve therefore of my laying down the great office which I have had honour to hold, I appeal to Your Highnesses here to-day and through you to the Princely Order and to all who exercise authority and influence in the Indian States, to see to it, that the splendid opportunity lying before the rulers of those States is not missed, and to ensure that advantage is taken of it with such vigour and foresight, with such judicious blending of old and new, with such subordination of narrow personal and local interests, to true patriotism that the future of India—of the Indian States in close collaboration with British India—may be ensured, and that future generations may remember with gratitude the part played by the leaders of Princely India in securing the stability of that common and glorious inheritance.

"When next this chamber meets, it will be under the Chairmanship of the great soldier and distinguished administrator who is now about to succeed me as Viceroy. Lord Wavell's wide range of knowledge and experience, the interest that he has always taken in the Indian States, are well known to Your Highnesses : and in the difficulties and the problems that have to be faced by the Indian States, I know that in him the States will have a wise, sagacious and sympathetic friend. And now before I close my address let me thank you all once again, and that most warmly and sincerely, for all the help and the constant and generous support that you have given to me in the 7½ years during which I have had the honour to preside over the deliberations of Your Highnesses, and to represent the Crown in its dealings with the Indian States and the Princely Order."

CHAMBER'S TRIBUTE TO LATE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER

Before inaugurating the session, the Viceroy unveiled a marble bust of the late Maharaja of Bikaner, to whom tributes were paid both by His Excellency and by the Jamsaheb of Nawangar, Chancellor. The Viceroy expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to salute the memory of His late Highness "not only as a great and inspiring leader but as one whose personal friendship I am proud to have enjoyed through so many years." His Excellency added : "No one, I think, would grudge to the late Maharaja of Bikaner the application of familiar lines which though written centuries ago, seem to be incomparably appropriate on this sad occasion : 'He was a man. Take him for all, in all, we shall not look upon his like again.'"

The Chancellor described the late Ruler as a "unique link between the message of the past and the promise of the future," and said : "A king among princes, he strove throughout his life to justify Indian India to the rest of India and a united India to the rest of the world."

On the Chancellor's motion, the Chamber recorded heartfelt sorrow and deep sense of loss sustained by the entire Order of Princes at the death of His late Highness of Bikaner, one of the founders and the first Chancellor of this Chamber who held the exalted office of Chancellor for five consecutive years and was General Secretary to the Conference of Princes for five years preceding the inauguration of the Chamber and Pro-Chancellor at the time of his demise, and offered sincerest condolences to the bereaved family.

The Chamber passed a resolution moved by the Chancellor recording profound grief at the death of the Duke of Kent and conveying deepest sympathy to the King and Queen in their bereavement. The Chamber adopted a resolu-

tion condoling the death of the Rulers of Jhalawar, Ajaigarh, Khilchipur and Kurundwad (Junior).

The Chamber by another resolution offered its heartiest congratulations to the Rulers of Ajaigarh, Bikaner, Charkhari, Jhabua, Jhalawar, and Khilchipur on their accession to the gadi and to the rulers of Barwani, Chhatarpur, Dhrangadhra and to the Thakur Sahib of Wadhwan on their investiture with ruling power and wished them a long and prosperous life.

The Ruler of Bikaner made a brief reply on behalf of those who were felicitated by the resolution. The Chamber then adjourned.

Resolutions—2nd. Day—New Delhi—15th. October 1943

States and War Effort

The determination of the Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India to continue to help in the achievement of final Allied victory was pledged in a resolution passed by the Chamber of Princes to-day on the Chancellor's motion. The resolution reads as follows:

"The Chamber of Princes records its expression of heartfelt gratification at the recent important victories of the Imperial and Allied forces in Africa, Sicily, Italy, Russia and other theatres of war and is proud to learn that the Indian troops have played a magnificent part in these achievements. The Chamber requests His Excellency the Crown Representative to convey to His Imperial Majesty and his Government, including in particular the courageous and inspiring Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the sincerest congratulations of the Princes of India on these glorious victories, and reiterates the firm determination of the Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India to continue to render every possible assistance towards the achievement of final victory and for the defence of their motherland and the vindication of high principles of justice and sanctity of treaties."

The *Jam Sahib*, in moving the resolution, dwelt on the contribution made by the States and said that in addition to the direct money contribution of over eight and a half crores of rupees, there were at present over twelve Indian State forces units serving overseas and about forty-six in British India. About forty other units had been raised by the States and so far nearly three lakhs recruits for the fighting forces had been contributed directly or indirectly by the States, in addition to trained technicians and unskilled labourers sent by them.

The *Jam Sahib* proceeded, "Your Excellency, uncharitable persons have already started warning us that when the time comes England will let down her friends to embrace her enemies because of their nuisance value. Please tell England that we of the Indian States repudiate such insinuations as mischievous and that we have full faith in England's plighted word and in her respect for solemn obligations. Moreover, I am a soldier, sir, and I know that politicians may have short memories, but soldiers are not apt to forget their comrades-in-arms."

"The news of the bombing of Madras," His Highness asserted, "adds to our resolve to crush the Japanese menace for the honour of our Motherland. I personally take these attempts as the final flicker of the flame."

The resolution was seconded by the *Nawab of Bhopal* and supported by the *Maharaja of Bikaner*, the *Maharaja of Dewas* (Senior) and the *Raja of Bilaspur*.

The Chamber passed a resolution on the Chancellor's motion extending a cordial welcome to the Rulers recently admitted as members of the Chamber in their own right and confidently hoping that by continuing to take an active interest in the affairs of the Chamber and the ordered progress of their respective States, these members would prove a source of added strength to the Chamber. The *Raja of Bhur* supported and the *Maharaja of Patna* supported the resolution. The *Nawab of Kurwai* made a brief reply on behalf of new members.

Two more resolutions, one placing on record the valuable services rendered by the *Jam Sahib* as representative of the States on the Imperial War Cabinet and the other placing on record the services rendered by him as the Chancellor of the Chamber, were adopted. The first resolution was moved by the *Ruler of Patiala* and seconded by the *Ruler of Gwalior*. The second resolution was moved by the *Ruler of Bahawalpur* and supported by the Rulers of *Dungarpur*, *Mandi* and *Khairagarh*.

The House also heard from the Chancellor a detailed statement reviewing the work of the Chamber during last year.

Chancellor's Address

The Chancellor, the *Jam Rahib of Nawanagar*, replying on behalf of the Princes to the Viceroy's opening address, referred to the additional "financial

burdens" recently imposed on the States in the form of surcharges on letters and telegrams. He said: "If these surcharges are enhanced or any other surcharges or fresh excises are levied, the share of the States in this additional revenue may be invested in war investments on behalf of the States so that funds may be available to the States for social services and post-war developments."

SUCCESSFUL FOOD CONTROL IN THE STATES

Referring to the food crisis, the *Jam Sahib* said he had already issued a circular appeal and many of the States had as a token of their genuine sympathy already responded through substantial contributions in cash or kind for the relief of the affected areas. It was a matter of satisfaction, he said, to them that in spite of the recent food and transport difficulties, the Governments of the States generally had been able to manage well the problem of food supplies to their people and had succeeded at great sacrifice to themselves, in controlling prices of food grains within their territories at much lower level than in the adjoining areas of British India. They had, in that connection, invited attention to certain facts with a view to enhancing the value of the co-operation of the States with the food policy of the Government of India.

Referring to inflation, the Chancellor assured the Viceroy that the States were fully alive to its dangers and were prepared to co-operate in anti-inflationary measures to the utmost extent permissible within their trial commitments. It must be, however, appreciated, that having regard to the varying conditions of the fiscal arrangements of the States and their relative backwardness in industrial development the measure and form of their co-operation in the matter must vary according to the circumstances and conditions of individual States. At the same time the States were entitled to claim that they must be consulted before the formulation and in the execution of such policies, affecting British India and the States in which their co-operation was desired and that there should be no discrimination against the States in the implementing of these policies.

LEASE-LEND AID FOR STATES

The *Jam Sahib* added that the problem of inflation should not be treated exclusively as one relating to currency and that measures for checking inflation could not succeed unless effective steps were taken to increase the volume of consumers' goods. For this purpose he urged that the States might be assisted in obtaining stores plant and machinery under Lease-Lend or otherwise. They might be supplied their requirements of iron and steel for agricultural implements and machinery to assist the grow-more food campaign and the Government of India might consider the desirability of obtaining necessary quantities of silver and copper under Lease-Lend arrangements to increase the issue of metallic currency, and the States which had their own metallic currency might similarly be assisted in this matter. This step was expected to a long way in preventing the hoarding of food-grains in the country.

Referring to post-war reconstruction and development, the Chancellor trusted that their representatives would be fully associated with the formulation and implementing of post-war plans as also with the execution of policies such as those relating to Lease-Lend, control of capital issue and trade and currency. He made a particular reference to air transport and said that the Indian States should desire to co-operate fully in the preparation of co-ordinated air transport plans, which might be designed in the best interests of India and with regard to the rights and interests of the Indian States.

ARBITRATION ON CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Referring to the constitutional issue, the Chancellor urged that disputes arising between the Government of India or a Provincial Government and any Indian States or between two or more Indian States or where a State was dissatisfied with the ruling or advice of the Crown Representative or his local representative should be referable as of right to a Court of Arbitration or the Federal Court as may be settled in consultation with the representative of the States. He particularly referred to the Viceroy's statement that the Crown's obligations "to protect carry with them equally binding responsibilities to ensure that what is protected continues to be worthy of protection." He said that that statement had raised vital problems and new issues of far reaching and grave importance which would receive their earnest consideration. In this connection the Chancellor referred to grave apprehensions that rights and interests of the Indian Princes were not receiving the consideration to which they were entitled because of their lack of nuisance value. In view of these grave apprehensions, it is felt that Your Excellency's successor

would be rendering a real service to the Crown as also to the States, if at his early convenience, he were to invite the representatives of the States for a free and frank consultation on the few outstanding questions and the ways and means to remove those prevailing apprehensions."

The Chancellor assured the Viceroy full support of the Princely Order in efforts to improve the position of Indians overseas, which included large number from Indian States. He said: "South Africa is now regarded as a test case. And those elements in India who like ourselves believe sincerely in the continuance of the British connection, must feel embarrassed if, in spite of India's signal services to the Commonwealth in the present war in Africa and elsewhere, the membership of the Commonwealth does not carry with it equality of status throughout the Commonwealth of His Majesty the King Emperor."

Concluding, the Chancellor observed: "Your Viceroyalty has been associated with some of the landmarks in the history of India. Your solid work for the health and happiness of the cultivators who form the backbone of Indian society has earned you a place of honour in the annals of Indian history. Your tenure of office as Crown Representative has witnessed a succession of important and new policies such as co-operative grouping, internal reforms, post minority management, reorganisation of the Chamber, admission of the new members, and the communique of April 16, 1943. It was but natural that in the discussion of these important matters, there have been occasions when we honestly differed. Your Excellency welcomed such honest differences of opinion and thereby earned our admiration."

Viceroy's Reply

The Viceroy, in winding up the proceedings, said he was much obliged for the Chancellor's reply and added: "He may rest assured that the various substantial points which he raised in his speech will receive appropriate attention. For my part, I desire once again to thank Your Highnesses for the support which you have given to me in this Chair year after year. I desire to tell you how grateful I am for the great personal kindness which you have shown to me. I should like to make a public acknowledgment of my high appreciation and assistance which at all times His Highness the Chancellor has been ready to give me, whatever the business in hand (cheers). I agree with him that the relations and understanding which have existed between himself as Chancellor and myself as Crown Representative have a very great value from the public point of view. Once again the virtue of private friendship in its bearing upon public affairs has been amply exemplified."

"I should like to tell His Highness and the Chamber how truly grateful I am and how touched I am by the kind words he used about my wife's work in India and the evident agreement with those words shown by Your Highnesses."

"In bidding Your Highnesses farewell for the last time, may I wish you and your peoples all happiness, success and prosperity in times to come." (Cheers.)

The Chamber at this stage adjourned *sine die*.

The Associated Chambers of Commerce

Annual Meeting—Calcutta—20th. December 1943

The Annual General meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce was held on the 20th. December 1943 at the Royal Exchange, Calcutta. *H. E. the Viceroy* opened the proceedings with a 40-minutes speech. His Excellency the Governor of Bengal attended the meeting and others present included Sir Edward Benthall, War Transport Member, Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Supply Member and Sir J. P. Srivastava, Food Member, Government of India, the Bengal Premier, Sir Nazimuddin, with nine other Ministers, Lt. General Mayne, Officer Commanding, Eastern Army, Dr. C. J. Pao, Chinese Consul-General in Calcutta, Mr. A. C. Dec Williams, Chief Secretary, Government of Bengal, Sir David Ezra, Mr. Justice Braund, Regional Food Commissioner, Bengal.

Chairman's Speech

Mr. J. H. Burder, who presided, referred in the course of his speech, to the future of European and British interests in India. He had heard much of what certain influential competitors were reported to have in store and how they pro-

posed that all British interests should be liquidated without delay. He would tell large Indian concerns that there was more than enough scope in furthering industrialisation for all with all the accumulated wealth which was lying dormant without buying up established concerns. Such was not the way of progress. Until the day when India was united to govern herself, said Mr Burdar, "we must expect such opposition to our interests and Press campaigns and criticisms in undue proportion. We should be the most unusual race if we did not merit some of it. Nevertheless I feel we can look forward to the future with that confidence which flows from knowledge of past achievements, business ability and business integrity."

Of the food situation Mr. *Burdar* said the reports from Bengal districts were already brighter and they hoped that the returning confidence had come to stay. Measures that would bring the necessary confidence would be the end of administration influenced by political expediency, the determination of the Government to enforce its will and control of crops as near as the source as possible. He paid a tribute to Viceroy who had made the food problem his first concern.

Referring to post-war reconstruction, Mr. *Burdar* said that he looked to the post-war reconstruction committees set up by the Government of India for prompt and authoritative lead but recalled with some misgiving that only one of them had ever held a meeting. India could not divest herself with any sense of reality from world affairs and this would be appreciated with greater emphasis as the deliberations of the post-war reconstruction committees proceeded.

Mr. *Burdar* pleaded that Government had to think more along the line of absorbing the increased purchasing power created by war activities. It could not be said that there had been any appreciable easing of the situation in the spite of the considerable sums which by these means had been drawn into Government coffers. They had to consider what could be done to encourage local production of more consumer goods and whether there was now a possibility of increasing imports of such goods. Employers must continue their efforts to induce a greater volume of saving but here they were up against the backwardness of the proper classes.

Of the Plenary Labour Conference and the Standing Labour Committee set up to assist the Government on India, Mr. *Burdar* said he did not feel that they were achieving their object. He was not sure that all employers were sufficiently alive to the necessity for an early betterment of the labourer's lot. On the other hand, there was an impression on the part of employers that Government did not really want their advice and that they would rush through legislation without due regard to the views of the employer who had to bear not only the cost but also a large share of the burden of administration. That the Indian labourer's condition of service were far below the standard of some other countries was indisputable and it was their duty to give every encouragement to Government.

Mr. *Burdar* also urged the necessity for closer co-ordination of Government's requisitioning policy against the wider background of war and post-war economics. He further pleaded for the promptest possible settlement by negotiation of the principles governing the assessment of compensation for requisitioned property of all types and where those principles had been laid down for prompt payment in accordance with them.

Viceroy's Address

His Excellency Lord Wavell said :

I thank you for your cordial welcome and good wishes. My wife and I very much regret that we are unable this year to make the visit of some weeks to Calcutta which the Viceroy has usually done at this period. You will I am sure appreciate the reasons. Our house has been handed over to the R. A. F. ; and my many preoccupations make me at present something of a bird of passage outside Delhi.

I should like to begin this my first public speech as Viceroy by acknowledging again the services rendered to me on the Middle East during the early part of the war, not only by Indian troops but by Indian industry, which supplied so many of our pressing needs. I can well remember the spirit of co-operation and helpfulness with which our demands on India were always met. There is no doubt that Indian help saved the middle East at a critical time and thus laid the foundation for our successes of 1943 in the Mediterranean area.

Indian troops are still contributing to the security of the Middle East and are playing a distinguished part in the hard fighting which is now taking place in Italy.

It was as you may imagine, a great regret to me to have to give up my command of the troops in India after just two years in that position. You have in General Auchinleck, who has succeeded me, one who enjoys the confidence and esteem not only of the fighting services, but of all sections of the people in India, both British and Indian. Under his command, the troops in India will be organised and trained for even more important tasks than ever, the final defeat of Japan.

You have had an example here in Bengal of the promptitude and efficiency of the army in the help it has provided to the civil Government in the food emergency.

We have all suffered a great loss by the death of Sir John Herbert. I know well, and I have no doubt you realise that his determination not to leave his post and to carry on with his work at a time when his health was causing him serious trouble contributed to the fatal breakdown, which was also aggravated by his acute anxiety about the troubles of Bengal, which he foresaw some months ago. He was a great gentleman, gallant and upright, whose kindness and friendship I valued highly. Sir Thomas Rutherford was given a most difficult task by having to take charge of Bengal in such difficult circumstances at very short notice, and you rightly appreciate what he has done in these circumstances.

PROGRESS OF THE WAR

Like Mr. Burder, I propose to confine myself to a few subjects, the most pressing that we have to deal with at the present time.

The prosecution of the war is naturally the most important. The United Nations have had so striking a run of successes during the last year, in Russia, in the Mediterranean, in the Battle of the Atlantic against U-boats, in the air offensive against Germany, and in the counter-offensive against Japan, in the South-West Pacific, that we have almost come to feel disappointed and aggrieved if we are not served up with a fresh victory at least once a day. There is a well known quotation from Horace, which says "Keep your head when in difficulties." His next lines are not perhaps so well known; "Refrain from excessive rejoicing when things are going well." We observed the first precept in our bad times, we are possibly in some danger of forgetting the second, now that things are running well. To some of you, the progress of the war during the last month or so has probably seemed slow, in comparison with the summer rate: you must remember that we are just passing through the season of the worst weather for operations in Europe: when the ground has not yet frozen hard in Russia and the roads are a quagmire; when winter storms are sweeping Italy and the Mediterranean; and when fog is apt to hinder our bombing offensive against Germany.

The ruling factor in all military operations is transportation, and in such weather the transportation problem becomes more acute than ever. Moreover, the swiftness of the Russian advances has increased the difficulties of supply and transportation, while the Germans are nearer their bases. We have every reason for sober confidence in a victorious outcome of the war in Europe in a not too distant future: but how far distant that future is cannot yet be determined.

While the progress of wars depends on transportation, their end depends always on morale. The morale of the German army is certainly still high, but that of the German people must be, to say the least of it, causing Hitler and the Nazi leaders an aching of the head and a sinking of the heart.

But the end of the war in the West is no more than the beginning of the war in the East on a scale required to bring about the defeat and unconditional surrender of Japan. The importance of the Eastern War not only to the East but to the whole world and to the future of civilisation still needs to be brought home to some. There can be no security, economic or military, until Japan is as thoroughly defeated as Germany. It is not a matter of recovering lost portions of the British Empire or the dividends in oil and rubber, it is the repulse of barbarism by civilisation which is at stake. The peace and happiness of the world depend on a complete and speedy liquidation of Japanese ambitions. The victory of General MacArthur's forces in the South-West Pacific, the fighting here on the Indian frontier and the resistance of our Chinese allies, have not only halted the Japanese advance but have already begun to thrust it back. The process will be continued and greatly accelerated. The enemy has tried to gain comfort and to make propaganda from the slowness of the Allied counter offensive. All such great efforts are apt to be slow at first, but as they gain momentum and resistance is weakened they sweep forward apace.

INDIA AS BASE OF OPERATIONS

I am sure that all India wishes success to the newly-established South-East Asia Command, to its inspiring leader, *Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten*, and to the able commanders and staff, British and American, who are gathering under him. The establishment of this new command, to control the offensives against Japan from India does not, of course, in any way lessen India's role, in fact it enhances it. India has to be organised as a base for a mightier force of warships, armies and air squadrons than has ever before been gathered in the East. We shall have ships, men and material in plenty. The difficulty will be to find space in our ports, on our airfields, on our railways and in our depots to accommodate them.

The war effort and preparations we have already made have placed severe strains upon our national economy, and we must take steps to make this stable to support the strains of the next year.

THE FOOD PROBLEM

The food problem must be our first concern. I do not propose to enter here into a long consideration of how we reached our present difficulties; our business is not to look back, but to look ahead.

Briefly, the main elements in the situation are these; India as a whole is normally almost self-sufficient in the principal foodgrains. But the majority of Indians are certainly under-nourished rather than over-nourished, so that there is no margin or possibility of tightening the belt in an emergency. Also the production of food in India is not evenly distributed, and the producers are mainly small men, farming on a subsistence basis. The position was one which might easily be dislocated by an unexpected shock. The entry of Japan into the war and our reverses in Malaya and Burma, which brought the war to the borders of India, provided the shock. Anxiety about the outcome of the war, and the loss of our rice imports from Burma caused the small farmer to hold more of his crop than usual, and the ordinary consumer to buy more than he really needed for immediate consumption. Lack of consumers' goods was a contributory factor to the tendency to hold on to food. In short, the first main cause was a widespread loss of confidence, which was natural enough, and in itself quite innocent. Unfortunately, there are in India, as in other countries, people who are not innocent, who were thinking of advantages for themselves very different from a mere assurance of their daily bread; and who were prepared without scruple to make money out of food scarcity, careless of the misery and death they might cause. There was undoubtedly hoarding and speculation on a large scale by such people. So that the second main factor was human greed. The third was the difficulty in overcoming the tendency of each province, division or district to treat food as a local matter instead of as an All-India problem; in distributing food over vast distances; and in establishing control over prices. This was an immense problem of administration for which the additional resources required were not easily available. It is small wonder that some mistakes were made in assessing the problem and in devising means to deal with it.

BENGAL'S PLIGHT

In Bengal abnormal causes were aggravated by the natural disasters of cyclone and floods; by nearness to the war; by the poverty of communications; and by the sparseness of the administration due to the permanent land settlement.

I should like to express my deep sympathy to the people of Bengal on the sorrows that have fallen on so large a portion of a frugal, hard-working population. This disaster has struck those least able to bear it, and the principal sufferers have been the weakest—the children, the women, the old man. It is the duty of us all not only to lessen their present sufferings but to take such steps as will ensure that such suffering does not occur again.

I have tried to outline the main elements which led us to the present position. The main remedies are obvious; to restore general confidence; to deal sternly with those who attempt to withhold food from the people for purposes of undue profit; and to arrange for equitable distribution over India of the available food at a reasonable price.

It is with the last of these aims that I want to deal in a little more detail.

FOOD AN ALL-INDIA PROBLEM

The first thing to get clear about food is that it is not a provincial problem; it is an All-India and even a world problem. India must have the food she needs; and the other countries of the British Commonwealth, and the United

States, are prepared to help her to import food to supplement her own production. But if by administrative negligence we are compelled to ask for more help from abroad than we really need, we are expecting other countries, whose people are already rationed and whose prices are properly controlled, to deny themselves unnecessarily, and to send us ships which are urgently required for direct war purposes. It is our plain duty to set up an efficient Food Administration more or less uniform throughout the country. If we fail to do so, we may cause distress in other countries, and prolong the Eastern war.

The policy accepted by the Central Government is that recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee of last summer. The object is to ensure that foodgrains are available in adequate quantities all over the country at prices which will give the producer a fair, even a generous profit, and at the same time, place food within the means of the poorest consumers. We must not aim to depress prices in favour of the town, so as to deprive the agriculturist, who is the backbone of India's economy, of a profit which will encourage him to grow the maximum amount of food crop; but he must not be greedy, or he will cause distress amongst his less fortunate brethren. The middleman is entitled to no more than a reasonable profit on the work; he is not allowed to make a fortune out of the cultivator's labour and the labourer's poverty. The key points in our plan are full rationing in the larger towns and control of prices, both backed by adequate administrative arrangements. As Mr. Burder has said, you cannot control prices by the mere issue of paper notifications.

I may say here in parenthesis that I hold personal touch a far better solvent for any problem of Government than paper. As a military commander, I tried never to issue instructions on paper where I could visit my subordinate commanders and discuss operations with them face to face; and I encouraged my staff to do the same. So far as possible, I hope to follow similar principles in civil administration.

You can control food prices only if every dealer from the village up to the main market and down again to the retail shopkeeper is subject to personal supervision and inspection, if the procurement operation of Government are rationally conducted, and if movements are strictly regulated.

URBAN RATIONING PRACTICABLE

It is said by some that urban rationing is unnecessary and impossible in India. This is nonsense. It is both very necessary and quite possible. In spite of all the difficulties of the past few months, Provinces such as Madras and Bombay, and States such as Travancore and Cochin, had kept the situation under control by rationing and by control of prices. For these Provinces and States, which are in deficit, stern necessity dictated these controls. In surplus Provinces, the controls are necessary to enable them to be self-supporting as possible, and to stand the strain both of war and of the immediate post-war period when the world food situation is likely to be tighter even than now. Sind, the Punjab, the United Provinces, and the North-West Frontier Province have recognised the need, and have practically subordinated their provincial interests to the interests of India. Actually, India's interests are their interests, since on this food problem we must stand or fall as a whole.

Measures are being taken to introduce urban rationing all over India, and a system of price control uniform for groups of Provinces. These measures will take a little time. We shall need all the support we can get from public opinion and the Press. If all people could be induced to realise that war shortages must be evenly distributed and that those who think only of themselves and their profits are despicable and unpatriotic, we should make a great step forward.

We have a food policy for India as a whole. I am quite clear that we can carry out this policy, to the great benefit of India, if we have, as I am convinced we shall have the willing co-operation of the Provinces, and the States. I am prepared, if necessary, to take the most drastic action in support of our policy.

In Bengal, the aid given by the army, coupled with the prospects of a bountiful *aman* harvest, have eased the position perceptibly. But there are no grounds for complacency. We still have to fight lack of confidence and greed and to see that administrative action is adequate for the future. The army cannot remain indefinitely to do the work of the civil administration. Bengal has the sympathy of the world at present, but this will not continue unless it is obvious that she is making every effort to help herself. The next six months will be the testing time, during which the Bengal Government's policy must be energetically pursued, and its administration strengthened.

You are aware of the main outlines of that policy, which aims at the restoration of confidence, the strict enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order to prevent speculation and hoarding, and the regulation and control of prices. The solution of Bengal's food problem now lies in Bengal's hands. The Central Government has provided a generous measure of assistance in undertaking to supply food for Calcutta during the next few months. But the Central Government cannot continue indefinitely to "carry" a Province to which nature has vouchsafed so generous a crop if through administrative inefficiency the Province fail to secure that it is properly procured and distributed.

I am in earnest in this matter. To my mind there can be no condemnation too severe, no penalty too stern, for those who attempt to make unauthorised profits out of food—or out of drugs—at a time of national crisis. Nor can lethargy and procrastination be tolerated; nor must political animosities be allowed to interfere with a fair food deal for everyone.

INFLATION AND FOOD

Mr. Burder has rightly linked inflation with food. The inflationary problem is incapable of solution if food is not subject to effective control, for food affects the whole price structure of our economy. This battle is everyone's battle. It will profit a man nothing to gain large increments by forcing up prices and thereby causing inflation, since the value of gains will be thereby reduced, and he may cause untold misery to others. The Central Government is determined to check the inflationary tendency by all means in its power. There is no occasion for undue optimism but no need to accept Mr. Burder's somewhat pessimistic view. The general price level has been relatively stable for several months now.

An increased supply of consumers' goods at controlled prices is a necessary factor in the fight against inflation. A start was made some months ago with cotton textiles and, owing to the excellent co-operation between the industry and the Government of India, considerable success has been achieved. Medicines and drugs have now been taken in hand. There are many other articles of which the Indian consumer is short owing to war demands—such as woollen goods, footwear, and iron and steel for the village manufacture of agricultural implements. Of these and other goods every effort is being made to obtain an increased supply, by import or release from war purposes.

Of taxation, which is another method of reducing the waist-line of inflation, I will not speak here. It represents the compulsory absorption of financial adipose deposit. The voluntary method is increased saving, which is much to be recommended. If the Chambers represented at this meeting will advise their constituents to redouble their efforts to support the provincial savings campaigns, and if all other employers in India will do the same, it will be a great assistance.

COAL PROBLEM

Shortage of Coal is another problem which the Government is taking seriously in hand. Coal is the essential food of industry and of the whole war effort, and we cannot allow either to suffer from starvation or malnutrition in coal.

Coal also is a world problem, and here again we are playing on a world stage. Our coal production may have an appreciative effect on the course of the war. I do not propose here to deal with the causes or with the remedies which we have in hand; merely to mention the problem.

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

I pass on to the longer-term problems of which Mr. Burder spoke, which may be grouped under the heading of post-war reconstruction. This is a very big subject and a very vital one. The years after the war are going to be of immense import to India's future. The problems and dangers are obvious. There will be a period of liquidation of the war effort, during which the fighting services will be disbanded, industry will return to a peace footing, stocks of war material will be for disposal, and the various economic controls will be gradually removed. Unless these processes can be prepared and undertaken in an orderly manner, great confusion or worse, may result. Then must come a deliberate effort to restart the national life on a better and more efficient footing to provide a standard of living for all Indians, in which account has to be taken of the rapidly increasing population at the present rate of some four to five millions a year.

In making this re-start India has very great advantages. Her natural resources are large. There will be a higher proportion of trained labour than before. In fact, India's supply of labour will be almost inexhaustible while the events of the war have proved that Indian labour under training rapidly acquires a high degree

of skill. India has many efficient men of business with wide experience. India will be a creditor country; she has suffered comparatively little in the greatest cataclysm in the history of humanity; and there is a great sympathy and will to help towards her, both in Great Britain and in America. There will be ample markets for her increased production, both at home and abroad. In fact, there is nothing to prevent India growing to be the strongest and most highly developed nation in the East, if she can solve her internal problems and make a united contribution to peace and prosperity in the post-war world.

The Government has in hand the preparation of plans to take advantage of India's opportunities in as great a measure as possible. In this the Government and industry must work very closely hand in hand. It is quite clear that development must be on an Indian basis and by Indian methods. But it is also evident that India will require assistance and advice at the first to help her to realise the great possibilities that are hers. While recently in England, I saw some of the leaders of British industry who are interested in India, and I found in them a spirit of most helpful co-operation towards India; there was certainly no desire to dominate or control Indian industry, but a desire to help on a basis of mutual advantage. I am sure that a visit by some of the leading Indian industrialists to the United Kingdom, in order to see the developments that have arisen during the war and to discuss India's problems with leading British representatives would be of the greatest possible advantage, and I hope that it may be arranged. The sooner the better; because other nations are already beginning to think about their post-war needs and to place orders for machinery and material.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER SCHEMES

So far as I have been able to discuss the problem with people of knowledge and experience, it seems to me that one of the first necessities is to develop power schemes throughout India so as to provide the driving force for industries. In some instances, it may be possible to combine this with irrigation schemes for agriculture, the improvement of which by all possible means must be our principal aim. Agriculture is India's main industry and is capable of very great development. The land can be made to yield more, the livestock can be improved and the whole standard of our rural community raised.

The development of industry and the improvement of agriculture must go hand in hand in order to provide for India's growing population and to raise the standard of living. The problem of labour, to which Mr. Burder referred, is naturally linked with these developments. I do not propose to go into any detail here of the relations between labour and industry but I know you will realise that there is much to be done.

IMPROVEMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The other great aim of post-war development is the improvement of the social services of which the principal are Education, Health and Medical Services, and Communications. These are mainly unproductive in the short-term sense, though in the long-run, of course, both fully proved essential.

I propose to join issue with Mr. Burder, who was inclined to place education in the forefront of his plans. I am the last person to undervalue education, but I think it is clear that from the practical point of view the full realisation of a scheme such as that outlined in the Sargent Report must wait on other developments. India at present has simply not the money for such a scheme. As the country acquires increased riches by industrial and agricultural progress, so it can afford to spend larger sums on education and health. This is, I think, the way in which the social services have developed in other countries, certainly it has been so in Great Britain where industrial development went a long way ahead of educational development and of public health. From the practical point of view, which is the view by which we must be guided, whatever the theoretical advantages of a different course would be, I think that the main social services must be developed in the following order: Communications, Health, Education. I put communications first since I do not see how it is possible to effect any great improvement in health or education in the villages of India until they can be reached surely and quickly at all times.

What I have said must not of course be taken to suggest that we must not allot as much effort and money as we possibly can to Health and Education; it is merely to indicate the practical limitations which may be summed up as "full bellies must come before full minds."

In the course of his speech Mr. Burder fired quite a few sniping shots at

the Government, and once or twice even brought artillery into action. I have made a note of his shots—particularly those on requisitioning and the administration of the Anti-boarding Ordinance—and where they hit the target we will signal a hit and try to repair the hole.

"The bouquets he bestowed on the hon Members for War Transport and Supply will be much appreciated by their recipients. I should like myself to take the opportunity to thank all hon. Members of my Executive Council for their courage and capacity."

THE POLITICAL DEADLOCK

I have attempted to review for you the progress of the war and the policy of the Government of India on our immediate economic problems: and to place before you some ideas on post-war reconstruction. I have said nothing of the constitutional or political problems of India, not because they are not constantly in my mind; not because I have not the fullest sympathy with the aspirations of India towards Self-Government; not because I consider political progress impossible during the course of the war—any more than I believe that the end of the war will by itself provide an immediate solution of the deadlock—but because I do not believe that I can make their solution any easier by talking about them just at present. For the time I must concentrate on the job of work we have to do. The winning of the war organisation of the economic home front, and the preparations for peace call for the use of all the resources India has in determination, energy, and intelligence. I welcome co-operation from anyone and anybody who can assist me in these great problems on which the future of India depends. While I do not believe that political differences can be solved by administrative action, I believe that if we can co-operate now in the achievement of the great administrative aims which should be common to all parties when the country is in peril, we shall do much to produce conditions in which the solution of the political deadlock will be possible. As head of the Government—and an old and sincere friend of India—I will do my best during my term of office to guide India on her path to a better future. It is no easy path, here are no short cuts, but I do believe in the future greatness that lies ahead, if we can work together to the solution of our problems.

Proposing a vote of thanks at the conclusion of the Viceroy's speech, *Sir D. L. Drake-Brockman*, Deputy President of the Upper India Chamber of Commerce, expressed the earnest hope that under the wise guidance of His Excellency issues and problems that faced the country at present would find an early solution.

Proceedings and Resolutions

Income Tax Tribunal

After the Viceroy had left, the meeting took up the resolution dealing with the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal, which ran as follows:

"This Association requests the early attention of the Government of India to the following matters connected with the practice and procedure before the income-tax Appellate Tribunal:

(1) That the request for the establishment of local registrars for filing of applications and for facilitating communications with the local benches be reconsidered.

(2) That the decisions of all benches of the Tribunal be made available to the public, if necessary by the amendment of Section 54 of the Indian Income-tax Act, and

(3) That the Government of India take an early opportunity, in consultation with commercial interests, of revising where necessary various provisions of the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal's rules and forms and the practice obtaining thereunder.

Moving the resolution, *Mr. H. Rowan Hodge* (Bengal Chamber), M.L.A. said that when the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal was brought into being by the Income tax Amendment Act of 1939, the intention of the Legislature was to give them not only an appellate body, which was independent of the Income-tax Department, but also a business like tribunal free from the formality and lengthy procedure of the courts and one from which practical and expeditious decisions could be expected.

Referring to the period of sixty days allowed under the Act for filing his appeal by a tax-payer, *Mr. Hodge* emphasised that it was most desirable to see that no time was wasted by having to post the application across India. He suggested the setting up of a district registrar in every place, where the bench

of the Tribunal sat. He requested the Government to publish the Tribunal's decisions by amending Section 54 of the Act.

Seconding the resolution Mr. J. M. B. Gibbons (Bombay Chamber) said that their experiences in Bombay were almost identical with those referred to by the mover of the resolution.

The resolution was unanimously adopted by the House.

Rent Restriction Orders

The next resolution moved by Sir D. L. Drake-Brockman (Upper India Chamber) stated: "In view of the increased cost of materials and labour and the fact that rents have remained practically unchanged owing to Rent Restriction Orders framed under the Defence of India Act 1939 and other causes, this Association invites the attention of the Central Board of Revenue to the inadequacy of the allowance of one-sixth of the *bonafide* annual value of property, consisting of buildings and lands appurtenant thereto permissible under Section 9 Sub-section (1) of the Income-tax Act (Act 1 of 1922), and recommends that it should be made more liberal by suitable amendment of the Act."

Commending the resolution for acceptance by the meeting the mover said that the proposal embodied in the resolution had already been circulated to constituent Chambers and had received general support, from which he gathered that dissatisfaction with the present position was general.

Excess Profits Tax

Mr. W. J. Younie (Bengal Chamber) moved the third resolution, which runs as follows: "This Association urges the Government of India to give an assurance to industry that on the termination of excess profits tax, all-revenue expenses incurred or accrued in earning these excess profits but not already included as a charge because of their indeterminate nature, will be allowed as a deduction in computing the final liability to excess profits tax; and that refunds of such tax in adjustment thereof will be made, should the tax have been removed.

In support of his resolution, Mr. Younie said it was imperative from India's point of view that no business which had prospects of contributing towards the country's post-war prosperity should be handicapped by excessive taxation, particularly in having paid taxes on profits which had been considered to be "in excess" but which, subsequently to the termination of excessive profits tax, could be proved to be accumulation which must be expended in order to restore business to a state from which, under good management, it could reasonably be expected to continue to trade for the benefit of the country and proprietors.

Mr. J. Nuttall (Madras Chamber), who seconded the resolution, said that any new taxation changed in form, or discontinuance of an existing tax resulted in anomalies because of the multitude of methods whereby the accounts of industries were maintained. These anomalies were not always apparent at the time the taxation measure was passed or discontinued, but this was no reason why the possible ill-effects of the change could not be anticipated.

The resolution was carried without any opposition.

Self-Sufficiency in Food

Rai Bahadur P. Mukerjee (Punjab Chamber) moved: "This meeting urges upon the Government the imperative necessity of making India self-supporting in the matter of food and recommends that all necessary steps for this purpose should be taken with the least possible delay and in particular, steps be taken to discourage the export of manures (including all commodities of manurial value) and also to arrange for the expeditious import, both of fertilisers and of plant for the manufacture of fertilisers on as large a scale as possible."

Rai Bahadur Mukherjee said that authorities competent to form an opinion anticipated that there would be world shortage of food for some years after the war and the United Nations' Conference on food and agriculture, which met in May last had urged the various National Governments to take steps to increase their food resources.

Seconding the resolution, Mr. F. C. Guthrie (Bengal Chamber) said the present food crisis had accentuated the need for increasing food production in India independently of outside supplies of fertilisers. It seemed to the speaker that technical investigation of the raw material position must first of all be carefully carried out and in particular the clarification of the raw material position, so far as the sulphate radicle was concerned.

The resolution was adopted *nem con.*

Post-War Reconstruction

The fifth resolution moved by Mr. J. Nuttall (Madras Chamber) stated: "This Association believes that a programme of post-war reconstruction should cover the whole social and economic field, including measures necessary to raise agricultural production and a determined drive against illiteracy, poverty and disease aiming at a substantial rise in the standard of living of the peoples of India and that such plans should include industrial expansion at a socially desirable level. To further the programme, it is resolved to recommend to the Government of India the immediate appointment of a Committee composed of those qualified to plan such measures as are necessary and to remain in session until their work is concluded."

Mr. Nuttall remarked that although the objectives behind the resolution were so far-reaching in their effect, it was none the less vital to deal with the issues.

Post-War Trade Policy

A resolution relating to post-war trade policy was then taken up by the House. The resolution runs as follows: "While this meeting welcomes the arrangements for international co-operation in regard to currency and trade matters, it desires to draw special attention to the comparative backwardness of India's economy and her low standard of living, and trusts therefore, that such arrangements as may be entered into on India's behalf will not interfere with the orderly development of India's resources both in men and materials, and in the consequential improvement in the standard of living."

"This meeting is further of opinion that, in the meantime, a comprehensive review both of customs tariff and internal taxation in India in all its aspects should be undertaken in good time so as to ensure a balanced development of India's economy on sound and secure foundations."

Moving the resolution, *Lala Shankar Lall* (Punjab Chamber) said that the two principal parties to the currency plan were reported to have not come to any agreement on fundamentals. Moreover, there was the danger that in concentrating on remote questions, they might, perhaps, miss those that were much closer to them and were possibly of more vital interest. That was why the resolution suggested an immediate enquiry to be undertaken in regard to operation of taxations in India, so that they might know exactly where they stood before they assumed international commitments regarding their trade and currency.

Sir George Morton (Bengal Chamber) proposed that the second paragraph of the resolution should be amended to read as follows: "This meeting is further of opinion that, in the meantime, a comprehensive review of taxation, excise and tariff in India, in all its aspects should be undertaken in the interest of ensuring a balanced development of India's economy on sound and secure foundations."

The resolution as amended was adopted.

War Risks Insurance

Mr. U. N. Sen (Northern India Chamber) moved a resolution on war risks insurance which stated: "In view of the substantial amounts standing to the credit of the War Risks (Factories) Insurance Fund and the War Risks (Goods) Insurance Fund and having regard to the all-round improvement in the war situation as a whole, the Associated Chambers recommended that the War Risks (Factories) Insurance Scheme be continued for a period of one year from April 1, 1944, at a rate of premium not exceeding one half of one per cent per annum and that with effect from the commencement of the next ensuing quarter, the rate of premium under the War Risks (Goods) Insurance Scheme be reduced to one-half anna per complete hundred rupees per months or part of a month."

Mr. Sen said that the actual receipts under the War Risks (Factories) Insurance Ordinance upto 31st March 1943, were approximately Rs. 908 lakhs and expenditure by way of remuneration to agents, inspecting staff and payment of liabilities, amounted to a little over Rs. 4 lakhs. Out of this sum however payment of liabilities under the scheme amounted only to Rs. 48,000, which showed how small had been the nature of the claims so far under the scheme. The budget estimates for the year 1943-44 of receipts expected under this scheme are about Rs. 7 crores so that the Fund would have at the end of March 1944 a credit of about Rs. 16 crores. The Fund, they believed, would be more that adequate to meet the claims which the improvement in the war situation led them to hope would be negligible.

Seconding the resolution, *Sir Harry Burn* (Bengal Chamber) said that taking into account the amounts standing at the credit of the two war risks funds there

must be very substantial balances available which should, he hoped, go far to provide the necessary cover required by present day conditions. *Sir Robert Menzies* (Upper India Chamber) supported the resolution which was passed.

Import of Capital Goods

Adoption by Government of early steps to facilitate the import of capital goods and bullion was urged in a resolution moved by *Rai Bahadur U. N. Mukherjee* (Punjab Chamber). The resolution runs as follows: "While recognising the efficacy of the steps taken by the Government to control inflation of currency, this meeting is of opinion that early steps should be taken to facilitate the import of capital goods and bullion and as a short term policy the import of consumption goods to meet the present deficiency."

While admitting the efficacy of the anti-inflationary measures such as, Government borrowing, control of bonuses and additional taxation so far taken by the Government, the mover thought the remedy for the evil consisted in making available more capital goods and bullion and also as a temporary expedient more consumer goods. The resolution, when put to vote, after having been seconded by *Mr. U. Sen* (Northern India Chamber) was adopted.

Claims in Respect of Damaged Property

The ninth resolution on claims in respect of lost or damaged goods against railway administrations reads: "While appreciating the greatly increased difficulties of Railway Administrations brought about by the war, this Association urges upon the Railways the necessity for improving the supervision and methods of handling cargo in transit by rail in order to reduce the heavy damage and losses at present being incurred and recommends that the procedure of the claims section of the various Railways be reviewed by a competent committee with the object of helping them efficiently and promptly to dispose of claims filed against them by the public." Moving the resolution, *Mr. H. F. Stackard* (Bengal Chamber) emphasised that the main object of the resolution was to direct attention of the Railways towards claims for damaged and missing goods. They understood that the Railway Administrations themselves recognised that there was room for improvement and that in some cases special officers had been appointed to investigate conditions. He expressed the hope that the railways would accept the resolution as an offer of constructive co-operation.

The resolution, was unanimously adopted.

Trunk Telephone Services

The resolution on trunk telephone services stated: "This Association draws attention to the present almost total exclusion of business interests from the use of the trunk telephone service as an instrument for the transaction of business and recommends that a period of two hours be reserved daily for commercial trunk calls, during which period only the highest priority calls will be accepted from selected departments and officials of Government and of the forces."

Moving the resolution, *Mr. U. N. Sen* (Northern India Chamber) recalled the correspondence on this subject which the Punjab Chamber of Commerce had last year with the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs and the suggestions then made, namely, that it should be impressed upon the civil and military authorities that a more sparing use should be made of priority privileges and to allocate the trunk lines for the use of the business community for some hours each day.

Rai Bahadur P. Mukherjee (Punjab Chamber) seconded the resolution, which was carried.

TRADE MARKS ACT

The last resolution dealing with the Trade Marks Act, 1940, ran as follows: "This Association invites the attention of the Department of Commerce to the need for an early settlement of the difficulties arising out of the necessity to satisfy the requirements of more than one registration authority in India and urges the Government of India to secure the acceptance of a common policy on trade marks registration as between British India and the various Indian States."

Moving the resolution, *J. Nuttall* (Madras Chamber) suggested that before the problem of trade mark registration became any more involved, the Government of India should at once re-examine how best to influence all Indian States to come within the scope of the British India enactment so that one registration in Calcutta or Bombay might serve for the whole of India.

After *Mr. C. P. Bramble*, M. L. C. had seconded, the resolution was put to vote and was adopted by the House.

The Indian Economic Conference

26th. Session—Madras—30th. December 1943

"It is a blot on civilisation that one-fifth of the human race should live in perpetual starvation, miserably perishing for lack of food, clothes and shelter, steeped in ignorance, harassed by disease and darkening the sunshine of the world's health and prosperity by serving as a perennial reservoir of diseases, plagues and epidemics. And when war and scarcity stalk the land, they die in their thousands like flies by the roadside, a grave and bitter testimony to man's inhumanity to man. Is it too much to ask that every nerve should be strained, every power mobilised to prevent the repetition of such catastrophes and make India safe for healthy living and high endeavour? Here, in India, far-sighted and sympathetic statesmanship has got unparalleled scope for inaugurating an era of plenty and prosperity for all sections of the vast population of India", said Dr. B. V. Narayanaswami Naidu in his presidential address to the 26th session of the Indian Economic Conference which opened on the 30th. December 1943 at the Senate House, Chepauk, Madras.

Delegates from all over India attended the Conference.

Welcome Address

Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Chairman, Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates, at the outset referred to the great loss sustained by economists in general by the death of Mr. N. S. Subba Rao.

Expressing the hope that when peace is restored a new world order would be established, the speaker added, that "many excellent sentiments have been given expression to, when men's minds were shaken by the devastating effects of war, sentiments which in the abstract are beyond all criticism but which may not be as easily demonstrable when peace is ensured and nations begin to turn to the constructive side of the rehabilitation. The Atlantic Charter was naturally hailed as the Magna Carta of human freedoms, for it was conceived on a proper appreciation of human values. The Charter, which has been endorsed by all the United Nations, states in its fifth clause that one of the purposes of post-war police must be—to quote the actual words—to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security. It would appear therefore that the economic reconstruction will be based on a global policy and not on the basis of the demands of individual nations. If such indeed is the future that is envisaged and if there is the remotest possibility of its being implemented, the world would indeed be metamorphosed into a kingdom as near to the Kingdom of Heaven as any that human intellect can visualise." The speaker continued: "Ere the ink on the pages on which the Atlantic Charter has dried, other voices are heard, voices of those who participated in this Charter of the United Nations, which give us cause for serious misgivings and which sound a note of warning." He referred to the colour bar 'raised by the stay-at-homes, to whom moral values make no appeal' and said, "Let us realise that we have to face the task that lies ahead of us, the constructive task of revival and reorientation, such that we may with a firm resolve safeguard the future of our fellow-countrymen and build up a society which shall be ensured freedom from want." He urged economists to give a correct lead "to set their house in order and to implement the many schemes of post-war reconstruction which are now under preparation." It was gratifying to note that at long last there was some sign that Governments were beginning to realise the value of the help and advice to economists and he hoped that in the larger problems of post-war reconstruction their help would be fully forthcoming and their advice would be fully availed of. It was equally gratifying to note that Capital and Industry was taking advantage of the advice of economists of repute—a step that would have yielded them greater profit had they taken advantage of it earlier. Soundng a note of caution the speaker added that the economist in India, as indeed in any other country, had to steer clear of the Scylla of officious interference of Governments and of the Charybdis of subtle blandishments of Capitalism.

One of the urgent problems that would naturally engross economists' attention, the speaker stated, was the problem of post-war reconstruction in India in the many phases of its national activity. He added: "In one sense perhaps it is not a disadvantage to think of post-war social and economic problems without the em-

barrassment of party politics and there is some reasonable hope of agreed conclusions which may be of value to any Government of the future, provided the basis of such recommendations is the welfare of the common citizen, who is the real backbone of the Nation." He would like to see in the reports of the post-war reconstruction committees both the ideal and the practical aspects of reconstruction emphasised. It was little use presenting a Nation with a well-drawn up scheme of social security in all its diverse aspects of health, education, freedom from want and insurance against disease, dirt, squalor and ignorance, if such schemes were to be given effect to at some distant future after the War and only when the resources of the country warranted the implementing of such schemes. There should be a plan drawn up but the first steps to implement that plan, the spade work needed should be considered now, if any real change was to be effected in the post-war world.

TASK BEFORE ECONOMISTS

The expansion of Industries, the opening out of many new Industries, Heavy or Key Industries, the future of trade and commerce, the relationship of Capital and Labour, the exploitation of the mineral resources of this vast sub-continent, the role of Government in the starting of such industries—these were receiving the attention of many of our eminent countrymen. In this connection the speaker emphasised the need for careful research and planned methods of enterprise. At a time of inflation many industrial concerns might be started by individuals, which under normal conditions might not survive the fierce onslaught of inter-national competition. The world all over was moving towards a merger and it was the economist's duty to advise Capital and Industry to pool their resources, so to share the profits and losses that the enterprise itself might survive the shocks of impact from any quarter. At the same time, the danger of large combines and possibility of exploitation should be guarded against.

The time had also come, the speaker stated, when better understanding and a more intimate association of interests should be established between Industry and Labour. Too long had advanced industrial countries in the West been accustomed to view labour as a means to an end, the building up of an industry or the enlargements of capital. Too long had men pleaded financial insufficiency for the many long-neglected reforms to be put into operation, but this war had opened the eyes of many and the question of finance cannot be pleaded as an excuse for shelving many of these social security plans. If India was to achieve a higher standard of living, he added, she had to develop and with a quick pace, industrially and agriculturally. The role of communications, the place of irrigation schemes for reclaiming barren areas and making them fertile, the implementing of those schemes of power, Hydro-electric or otherwise, over the whole sub-continent to foster the growth of industries and agricultural enterprise so that the benefits of technical progress might be shared by all regions. These surely afforded great scope for constructive thought and planning. The development of "human capital", was also important. The attention that had to be devoted to education and public health and for which economists would have to suggest ways and means for financing such schemes on a generous and expanding scale would prove the touchstone of any genuine scheme of economic reconstruction. The recent scheme for training Technicians as a war measure should be an object lesson to the Government and to Industrialists alike. Too long had education been regarded as a non-remunerative enterprise and financial purists had confined themselves to the delectable task of limiting educational expansion to the available resources of current revenue. It would be for the economists to make it clear that any large scale expansion and reorganisation of education primary, secondary, University, technical and technological, was possible only if a new policy of subsidising these national schemes of reconstruction through large loans raised for such purposes was adopted. The same was true of problems of public health. The responsibilities which would devolve on the State, the manner in which finances were to be raised, the apportionment of expenditure on the different projects of economic reconstruction and the sweep of the economic offensive to be directed against poverty, were tasks requiring the advice of experts, disinterested and humane. The speaker hoped that the Conference, which is discussing some of the problems pertaining to the War period, would not neglect the equally important problems of post-war development.

NEED TO PRESERVE ECONOMIC UNITY OF INDIA

Dr. Mudaliar continuing said that whatever might be the forms of Government which this great sub-continent might ultimately decide to have, the need

to preserve the economic unity of India as a whole could not be ignored. The schemes of post-war reconstruction should be "so shaped that they formed a co-ordinated whole, a well-knit mattress of closely interwoven enterprises, each unit contributing its own share and all benefiting by that larger and nobler loyalty of "each for all and all for each", such that India as a whole may take its rightful place in the comity of nations commanding respect and admiration alike, by the picture of united effort it may present."

As one interested in University education, the speaker hoped that Economics, which at present was a popular subject with all students, would occupy even a more prominent place in academic studies in the future. He hoped it would be possible to expand and extend those special fields of economic study, which went so largely towards an appreciation of applied Economics. He emphasised the importance of the study of Statistics, economic Geography, modern economic History, Statistical and Scientific methods of economic study and research.

He concluded by reminding them of the lesson of history. "The world is built on moral foundations. Institutions perish, customs change and alter. Kingdoms rise and fall. The moral law alone is enshrined on the tablets of eternity."

President's Address

After thanking his fellow economists for the honour done to him, Dr. *Narayanaswami Naidu*, in the course of his address, said: "India's economic position has been considerably changed by the war. Her foreign trade has experienced a rude shock. Industrial production has been diverted towards the supply of war materials. New industries have been started for the supply of goods formerly imported from other countries. Many commercial crops cannot now be exported and the production of food crops has had to be increased owing to the stoppage of imports. Many of these tendencies will be fruitful of good if they are controlled and directed towards the peace needs of the country; but they must first be protected against the stress and strain of post-war changes in relation to Indian fiscal economy which in particular is quite vulnerable to international price levels. If the desirable trends we now see in Indian economy were to continue, a reconstruction plan should be devised so as to take into account the permanent needs of the Indian people in relation to their progress and development."

Dr. *Narayanaswami* then referred to the appointment of the Reconstruction Committee and the work which awaited the various sub-committees in their individual spheres. Proceeding further, to consider the ideals that should guide us in the post-war reconstruction of India, Dr. *Narayanaswami* said that for the complete industrialisation of India, three kinds of industries should be started: (1) Industries that fill up the gap in our industrial structure by reducing the dependence of existing industries on foreign sources of supply for certain raw materials, (2) Key industries without which the large-scale factory-production of consumer's goods cannot be achieved economically and (3) Industries essential for the defence of the country.

But before organising a post-war plan, Dr. *Narayanaswami* continued, the scope of the reconstruction plan should be defined and in order that any post-war reconstruction plan may become ultimately useful, two essentials should be satisfied. The plan must, firstly, reduce the impact of sudden and drastic changes both at home and abroad on the economic position. Secondly, it must prevent the changes from war to peace economy from either disorganising the national economy or neutralising the industrial and economic progress achieved during the war or from rendering the nation less fit to realise its economic aspirations and aims. Reconstruction plans should render permanent the progress made during the war. Hence it is essential that post-war reconstruction in India should not be of a restrictive kind. India has got raw materials and has a good consumer's market at home for her finished products, and the country accordingly requires all-round expansion of her industries in the post-war period.

POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS

Dr. *Narayanaswami* went on to refer to the various problems that would arise in the period of reconstruction. On the social side, the cessation of hostilities would bring unemployment to many and this should be solved by suitable adjustments in the capital programmes of Governments, Corporations and public bodies and by organisation of emergency relief. In the field of industrialisation, the plan should be to promote increased self-sufficiency for India and to increase consumption of industrial raw materials in indigenous industries. With regard to agriculture an attempt should be made to minimise the "unexampled pressure of the population

against the means of subsistence" by introducing reforms from all sides, technical, economic, fiscal and social. India's foreign trade was bound to take a new shape altogether in the post war years and new markets should be discovered in America, Australia and China. In this connection, the policy of the Government should be such that the Indian shipping will have scope for rapid development. With regard to finance, the inter-related problems of accumulated sterling reserves and inflation called for early solution. Above all, the important question of public health should be given the foremost place in any scheme of reconstruction.

Dr. Narayanaswami then discussed at great length the old theory of *laissez-faire* and the modern phenomenon of war-time economic control and said: Hitherto the material resources of India have been mobilised for winning the war. The time has now come for us to realise that as soon as the war is over, this mobilisation cannot be dropped, but has to be reoriented for winning the greater victories of peace. It is up to us to realise, that we have to see to it that the war controls are carried on into peacetime and utilised by capable and sympathetic hands for the promotion of India's wealth and welfare. The aim should be steadily kept in view to bring about a maximum utilisation of the material and human resources of the vast sub-continent of India in the interests of all its inhabitants. Such a plan will lead to the providing for all Indians the minimum of necessities like food, clothing, housing, medical help and education.

In any scheme of social welfare, provision for cheap, abundant and nourishing food should take the place of honour. Taking as basis a family of three adults and two children, the minimum annual food requirement for this unit would be Rs. 240, if we are to take Dr. Aykroyd's standard, while other essentials like fuel would demand an additional Rs. 120. According to this computation, every individual with a family, requires Rs 30 per mensem excluding contributions for social insurance. This would involve a provision for a total income of at least Rs. 3,000 crores a year. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that this is only the minimum; the average is bound to be higher and therefore in order to ensure the minimum to all, the national income will have to be many times this figure.

No effort should be considered too arduous, no expense too heavy for carrying into execution a comprehensive plan which will include both agriculture and industry. Whenever in the past a plea was made for nation-building activities, an old horse, named lack of capital, was trotted out by obscurantists. Where there is a will to bring about a new order in India, the way can surely be devised. If there is to be an easy transition from a war economy to a peace economy, if India's millions are not to be for ever starving, ignorant and suffering, a co-ordinated plan for industrial and agricultural development is a prime need.

DESIGNING OF PLANNED ECONOMY

"Any planned scheme of economic development for India," said Dr. Narayanaswami, "must not be a slavish imitation of western industry with its urban civilisation and perpetual clash of classes. Industry at the present day has reached a stage when it is dependent for its very existence and survival on the sympathy, encouragement and active support of the State. When a State like India wants to promote new industrial ventures, it can itself undertake the organization, and see that it is worked in the interests of all the people. Even if new enterprises are entrusted to individual or corporate management, the State should insist that the benefits thereof flow equally to the whole community and are not utilised to promote the profits and interests of a few. In other words, the planned economy of post-war India must be so conceived and designed that surely and inevitably it will lead ultimately to a socialistic new order in India."

"In the middle of the twentieth century," Dr. Narayanaswami concluded, "we in India are living in a mediaeval economy, with the rich man in his castle and the poor man at his gate. The staggering disparity between our present poverty and our potential prosperity should continue no longer. If our present economic backwardness is not to leave behind an inheritance of suffering and misery to generations yet unborn, if modern civilisation is not to proceed from one catastrophic total war to another still worse, India should be strong in herself and capable of standing as an economically prosperous nation. No modern industry can thrive in any country, however advanced it may be, without a full measure of support from the Government of the country. Here, in India, far-sighted and sympathetic statesmanship has got an unparalleled scope for inaugurating an era of plenty and prosperity for all sections of the vast population of India. Given a unified plan for the whole of India, the carrying out of the plan may be entrusted to the provinces. There should be centralised

management and decentralised fulfilment. What is wanted to-day is drive, initiative and leadership. May we be granted wisdom to see clearly, courage to plan nobly and faith to transform the visions of to-day into the achievement of to-morrow! However long the path, however arduous and exacting the journey, let us go forward with the conviction that our goal is no less than a brave new world of health and happiness, international peace and world wide co-operation."

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao thanked the Vice-Chancellor and expressed the gratification of Indian Economists at the recognition granted to them by the Vice-Chancellor of the part which economists had and could play in post-war reconstruction. During the past 15 months, the economists of India the speaker said, had without fear or favour discharged their duties to the country and many of their suggestions had been acted up to.

The morning session then came to a close.

Proceedings of the Session

Control Problems

Reassembling in the afternoon, the Conference discussed questions relating to "Economic Controls in India during the war." Dr. B. V. Narayanaswami Naidu, President, was in the chair.

Dr. R. N. Poduwal (Annamalai University) read a paper on "Wartime Control of Foreign Exchanges in India." He said that as a member of the sterling group of countries, India had to surrender surplus foreign currency proceeds to the Bank of England in exchange for sterling funds in London. The United Kingdom Government thus obtained short-term credits as well as foreign currencies for its external war finance. Dollar balances to the credit of India instead of being surrendered to the U. K. in exchange for sterling could well have been utilised in the initial stages of the war for the importation of machinery, tools, etc. from the United States for the acceleration of the pace of India's industrial development.

Prof. M. Abdul Qadir (Osmania University), in his paper on "Industrial Disputes during Wartime and their Settlement," said that any type of machinery devised for the settlement of industrial disputes should aim at minimising the chances of facile recourse to strikes on the part of workers. Referring to proposals for compulsory arbitration, the speaker said that the tendency to replace voluntary conciliation by compulsory arbitration was not a happy change. Now that the Government of India had recognised the principle of joint deliberation by calling the first conference of representatives of labour employers and the Government, he hoped that the standing committee set up by the Tripartite Conference would act as a machinery permanently available for the speedy determination of industrial disputes and formulation of a planned labour policy.

Prof V. S. Ram (Lucknow University), presenting a paper on "Price Control in the United Provinces", said that earlier than any other part of India, the United Provinces realised the need for regulating prices and rationing. Price control there was not statutory but was effected through administrative regulations. Price control in the province had so far not been a success; it could not be a success in any area unless it was dealt with over the whole country on a uniform basis.

Mr. V. V. Ramanathan (Andhra University), in his paper on "War and Road Transport Control" said that inevitable effect of control had been a drastic curtailment of supply of transport. The roads were fast deteriorating and local bodies with inelastic revenues were unable to keep them in good repair. The Government should make more provision for allocating large sums to enable them to undertake this work. They should from now plan out the post-war co-ordination of transport, the various motor transport system being brought under groups or syndicates and co-ordinated with the railway.

PROFITEERING MUST BE CHECKED

Dealing with the problem of Price Control, Dr. Anwar Iqbal Qureshi (Osmania University) said that price control in the past had miserably failed and it was likely to fail in future also, speaking of it as a peace time measure in a capitalistic economy. But in wartime, when the law of demand and supply did not function normally, it became a question primarily of feasibility; if it was possible to control, prices must, then, be controlled. Slogans like "Blanket control of all prices would not do. Profit control and not price control was the policy that he would recommend. He would claim that this policy had been worked with considerable success

in Hyderabad State. He would also suggest that the penalty for profiteering should be death or public flogging. "Let us not", the speaker said, "launch out on ambitious Programme of controls; let us do it on a modest scale but let us do it thoroughly and effectively."

Prof. B. Govinda Rao (Guntur) read a paper on "Some Aspects of Economic Control in India during the War", in the course of which he stressed the need for planning for future development on the basis of present measures of control.

Prof. Sh. Ata Ullah (Aligarh University) in a paper on "Wartime Control of Foodstuffs in India" emphasised the importance of securing the Home Front. He also read a paper on the system of price control enforced by *Alauddin Khilji*, Sultan of Delhi, during the twenty years of his rule and the elaborate system of control, supervision and punishment devised by him in this behalf. The lesson of that experiment, the speaker said, was that for the success of price control. it was essential to have a well paid, honest, reliable and efficient agency. After the costly experience in Bengal there could be no two opinions as to the need of control of foodstuffs; but the Government should think well over the steps to be taken and then take determined action.

Speaking on "The Problem of Price Control in India". Mr. J. Satyanarayana emphasised the importance of guaranteeing a minimum price for agricultural produce increasing consumers' goods, and drawing off surplus purchasing power by means, among others, of higher rates of interest.

Rice Rationing in City

Mr. K. S. Sonachalam (Annamalai University), in a paper on "Rice Rationing in Madras City" said that price control without rationing was like a body without soul. Describing the arrangements made in connection with rationing of rice in the city, he said that the rice procurement system worked on the whole effectively. The Government in their anxiety to "satisfy or placate urban population" should not, he urged, "sacrifice the interests of inarticulate but indispensable rural producers," if ceiling prices tended to chill the enthusiasm of ryots, the consequences might be serious and hence he urged the desirability of fixing "floor" (minimum) prices as well. Rationing in Madras had been a substantial success, despite the suspected existence of black markets. The disparity between the estimated consumption of 10,000 tons per month and the real consumption of only 8,000 tons, could be explained by either consumers drawing on secret hoards or reserves built up in the past, their refraining from buying rice on account of its quality not being good or the preliminary enumeration and the estimates built thereon being exaggerated. In conclusion, the speaker pleaded for the introduction of rationing in respect of firewood and sugar also.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS OF CONTROL MEASURES

A discussion then followed.

Professor Rudra, Economic Adviser to the U. P. Government, said that in dealing with the subject of economic control, one should remember that the success of measures, albeit of the utmost economic validity, depended on the ability, honesty and industry of the administrative staff in charge. Price control should be viewed, not parochially or provincially, but from an all-India point of view. It was high time that qualified students of economics should more closely collaborate with the administration, industrial workers and commercial interests to help, so far as academic research could, to tide over difficulties, solve problems and administer schemes. Price control, to be effective, should take into account not merely territorial parities but also parities of different commodities as well as of agricultural and non-agricultural goods required by producers. A system of ceiling prices rather than price control was desirable and he hoped the U. P. Government would be permitted to follow this line. But if the Government of India embarked on a policy of statutory price control, then the U. P. too would fall into line.

Referring to difficulties arising from competitive buying by "powerful agencies" and organisations like large employers, the transport problem, lack of organisation among traders, Prof. Rudra said that the issue of enormous purchasing power created by no means a small problem. He said that there were instances where one could buy more or less according as he paid in silver and small coins or in paper money. It was therefore, essential, he said, that the media of currency should also be regulated simultaneously if the price control machinery was to work smoothly.

Second Day—Madras—31st. December 1943

Price Control and Rationing

The discussion on questions relating to "Economic controls in India during the war" was continued when the All-India Economic Conference resumed its sessions this morning at the Senate House, Chepauk.

Prof. *B. Shenoi* said that the main consideration of the Government at the present time was the maintenance of law and order in the home front and from that point of view the Government had introduced rationing mainly in bigger cities and in his opinion the system had been working well.

Prof. *R. B. Bhan* (Kashmir) said that price control and rationing need not necessarily be an all-India affair. They could be worked out fairly successfully in smaller regions.

Mr. *J. J. Anjaria*, Reader of Economics in Bombay University, said a completely centralised control of production and even of distribution was necessary. But the practical difficulties in the way of applying a unified policy were the political relationship which subsist between this country and England, and the want of co-operation by the public to the extent necessary. Under the present circumstances there was no way by which we could devise a procurement machinery which was equitable to the producer and the consumer.

Principal *D. G. Karve* (Poona) observed that even within the provinces themselves there was no unified control. A separate department solely concerned with the control question should be established.

Dr. *P. S. Lokanathan* observed that there was necessity to alter some of the assumptions which the Government had taken for granted in their policy of price control. Instead of a vague policy, if the Government had gone on a selective basis, they would have achieved better success, and the working would have also given wider satisfaction.

Prof. *Gianchand* (Patna) said that there should be one central buying organisation which should buy for all requirements, both military and civil.

Mr. *Lakshminarasu* (Hyderabad) said that in other free countries civilians had as much priority as the military and that condition must be made applicable to India also. He said that the financial policy of the Government of India was also responsible for the present situation. The armies of other countries now stationed in India must be paid for by their respective countries. They could not have any efficient and effective machinery for price control unless there was a popular government in the centre and in the provinces.

Dr. *V. K. R. V. Rao* said we could not really tackle economic controls, even of a diluted type, without the people having the feeling that the interests of the public were identical with the interests of the Government. Only a responsible and responsive government could achieve efficient results.

Prof. *Vakil* (Bombay) stated that till there was a change of outlook on the part of the Government and in the methods adopted by the business community in general, and unless the political tension in the country was lessened, there could not be any effective control of prices and distribution.

Prof. *S. Vydianatha Aiyar* (Dacca) said that it was largely an administrative problem. It was the lack of co-ordination between the different departments and the apathy of the public that were responsible for the present position.

Dr. *A. Krishnaswami* suggested that the problem could be solved by having a single procurement agency.

The discussion on the subject concluded.

REGULATION OF BANKING

Reassembling in the afternoon, the Conference discussed the question of Regulation of Banking in India.

Mr. *V. R. Pillai* (Travancore) in his paper said that legislation could not go far enough to establish and work a sound regulation system, as banks were not flourishing in all parts of the country. He then surveyed the growth of Joint Stock Banking Companies with particular reference to its growth in the Travancore State, where recently as they all knew a great crash had occurred. He next referred to the amendment of the Indian Companies Act in 1936 and stated that this amendment, in his opinion, was having a salutary effect in eliminating mushroom and fraudulent banks. In his view, some of the suggestions of the Reserve Bank for safeguarding the interest of depositors were not good enough for the progress of banking. The safeguards seemed to hinder the business of banking. For example,

the insistence on cheque habit was too premature. Legislation could not prevent failure of banks. Steps must be avoided to ensure good management. For that purpose the Reserve Bank should make arrangements to give training in banking and organise inspection of all banks periodically. In fact it should devise a co-ordinating system by which it could have a direct or indirect control over all banks in the country.

Mr. A. R. Bhat of Poona, in his paper which was read by Prof. D. G. Karve, stated it would not be in the interest of proper growth of banking institutions in the country to lay down statutory restrictions on investments and day-to-day management of banking companies. He suggested that no banking firm should be permitted to be organised as a private limited company if the depositors' interest was to be safeguarded. It was also necessary to restrict the number of votes which a shareholder could possess. The Reserve Bank's recommendation of Rs. one lakh as the minimum paid up capital to start a joint stock bank would affect many an existing banking concern and it would almost be possible for mofussil areas to float their own banks.

A discussion then followed.

Mr. Munuswami Aiyar (Annamalai University) stated that banks in South India had successfully defeated the purpose of price control methods and that they were playing a prominent part in booming up textile prices. There had been no doubt a belated ordinance prohibiting forward dealings, etc., by banks. The time had come to give a place on the directorate for the representatives of deposit-holders also. On the analogy of the Legal Practitioners' Act, he would like some restrictions to be imposed on banks for the purpose of diverting their finances for helping industrial enterprises instead of speculating on land properties and plantations.

Mr. L. N. Govindarajan (Loyola College) said the proposal of the Reserve Bank that 30 per cent of the working fund of the bank should be invested in Government securities, would be a great handicap for small banks in which most of the deposits were saving deposits. In his opinion, a desire to earn profits and to build a reserve fund were not opposed to the development of sound banking.

The Conference then rose for the day.

Third Day—Madras—1st. January 1944

Control of Inflation

Discussion on the question relating to currency expansion during the war, took place to-day when the All India Economic Conference resumed its session at the Senate House, Dr. B. V. Narayanswami Naidu presiding.

Mr. T. Satyanarayana Rao (Guntur), leading the debate, emphasised the need to bring down prices of commodities and to have a comprehensive and co-ordinated plan for control of monetary system. He also pointed out that inflation could be checked by adopting a scheme of compulsory borrowing and by limiting the income of certain classes of people in the urban areas to Rs. 2,000.

Dr. B. K. Madan, Director of Research, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, speaking on the inflation in the Indian economy, pleaded for a clear understanding of the essential character of the problem. After pointing out that the primary source of war-time inflation lay very largely in the additional expenditure undertaken by the Government, he referred to the measures adopted against inflation by increasing production and restricting people's incomes by taxes or loans. Referring to the controversy as to whether the rise in prices resulted from the general scarcity or shortage of goods in relation to demand or from the expanding monetary circulation, he said that the controversy appear to betray a confusion of thought resulting from the fact that the problem of rising prices was alternatively viewed from two different angles, which disclosed opposite facts of what was essentially and fundamentally the same phenomenon. Scarcity in relation to demand and currency expansion were the simultaneous expression and outcome of the considerable diversion of real resources from civilian to war services, effected by the issue of purchasing power created to this end and they together contributed to the rise of prices. The supposed antithesis between the two explanations was thus artificial and unnecessary. As regards broad lines of the existing financial controls the position was, indeed, one extreme satisfaction as far as the revenue of the Government of India went, the estimated deficit and capital expenditure on defence up to the end of the next financial year being all covered by the increase in internal debt. After referring to the accumulation of sterling balances in Britain, Dr. Madan stated that the present inflation arose out of a process which while immediately inflationary also created the material for damping the inflation

in due course, and therefore also served as a check upon the degree of active inflation. Touching upon the question of the anti-inflation programme, he emphasised the need for intensified production and fair distribution of food supplies.

Mr. M. Adiseshaaya, (Madras) suggested the modification of the lease-lend agreement between India and other Allied countries for effective control of inflation. He also stated that the economy of the country should be divided into two sections, military and civilian, and steps must be taken to block the currency going into the military section. The income of the people residing in urban areas might be controlled.

NEED FOR CO-ORDINATED SCHEME

Professor Kapur (Lahore) observed that in his opinion the expansion of currency in India had not been made to an undesirable extent.

Mr. V. R. Pillai (Travancore) pointed out that in the present circumstances inflation might appear to be treacherous because it goaded people into the belief that they had sterling assets and that things would right themselves on the basis of that security. After all that security might prove illusory.

Professor Muthia (Pachaiyappa's College) suggested that steps might be taken to get possession of the British investments in India for furthering war efforts instead of merely inflating the currency.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari asked the Conference to definitely give a lead to the country in what way inflation should be stopped and what the Government should do to meet the future demands of the Allied countries for supply. He also desired the Conference to concentrate attention upon the present method of the Reserve Bank selling gold and whether that was a right policy in the interest of India.

Professor Vakil (Bombay) replying to the question stated that they did not know the actual facts as to how and wherefrom the Government got the gold and how it was being sold. Unless they knew the exact position, they could not usefully discuss the problem. Of all the anti-inflation measures the most urgent one was a settlement of the political tension in the country.

Mr. Zacharius (Madras) suggested the delinking of the rupee from sterling and the sale of the sterling now as the two measures for checking inflation.

Dr. P. S. Loganathan stated that the expansion of currency was one of the methods by which this war was being conducted. Under the present circumstances what they must insist upon the Government doing was a guarantee to the people of their essential needs and then draw upon the balance for military purposes.

The discussion on the subject then concluded and the Conference adjourned for luncheon interval.

POLITICAL DEADLOCK, A HANDICAP

"The greatest anti-inflationary measure which can be adopted in this country is to resolve the present political deadlock compared with that measure every other measure is of secondary importance", said Professor Gyanchand of the Patna University.

"A total war effort," the Professor said, "requires total co-operation of the people and total co-operation of the people would be unobtainable if political difficulties of the kind that are there should continue."

The Conference next took up for consideration, "Recent structural changes in capitalistic economy." Professor Gyanchand (Patna) opening the discussion referred, among other matters, to such developments as, the growing recognition of the desirability of giving to the people, according to their needs, the idea that labour was not a vendible commodity, development of corporations with criteria of production based on social costs rather than money costs and the realisation that displaced labour was a liability and therefore technological developments should be limited by this factor. He added that the developments now witnessed had not changed the centre of gravity of capitalistic economy.

Mr. K. C. Ramakrishnan (Coimbatore) referred to the growth of "agricultural capitalism" and large scale farming in some of the districts of Madras and suggested the desirability of exploring the possibilities of co-operative effort in this connection.

Bringing the proceedings to a close Dr. Narayanaswami Naidu reviewed the work done during the three days of the Conference. Despite differences in methods of approach to problems, he had no hesitation that all economists assembled were agreed on the fundamentals. The poverty of India was, they were all agreed, the most important factor that confronted economists and statesmen to-day and they were equally unanimous that all that could be done must be done to see a better standard of living assured to their countrymen. While he welcomed the suggestions

that industrialisation should be rapidly promoted, he thought "*Laissez faire* was gone once for all." He urged that care should be taken to see that industrialisation was effected in a way as would promote the general well-being of the people at large and did not fall into the hands of vested interests. He thanked the authorities of the Madras University for placing the University buildings at the disposal of the Reception Committee and the delegates, the volunteers and others who had co-operated to make the Conference a success.

Prof. Gyaachand conveyed the thanks of the delegates to the Reception Committee for the arrangements made and Prof. Zacharias proposed a vote of thanks to the President. The Conference then concluded.

The All India Philosophical Congress

18th. Session—Lahore—21st. December 1943

Sir Manohar Lal's Opening Address

"The reproach has often been made that in India philosophy ceased with the ancient school, at any rate after Sankara. Would that remain a lasting stigma on the genius of Hindustan"? asked the *Honorable Sir Manohar Lal*, Finance Minister, Punjab, while inaugurating the 18th session of the Indian Philosophical Congress before a representative and distinguished gathering of philosophers from all over India, in the Hailey Hall of the Punjab University at Lahore on the 21st. December 1943.

Inaugurating the Congress Sir *Manohar Lal*, amidst cheers, said:—I possess no title to address your learned and scholarly assembly—and just these days I happen to be immersed deep in the vulgar calculations of our provincial finance, and no oracle has appeared to offer me inspiration. The age that lies behind us, extending even beyond the limits of the present century, has engaged in much crude reasoning and wishful thinking, and been troubled by pressing economic and political problems. I note that in economics, may be under stress of war, dissension is giving way to considerable agreement in approaching questions though final aims still await firm determination. Immediate tasks, the work in hand, absorb all attention though in thinking of the new world order, broader questions of welfare, at least in limited fields, cannot escape attention. In the political field, diverse have been the objects of study and interest, some thinkers regard idealism as the ever-growing trend that dominates thought. Shall I be correct in venturing upon the thought that much recent philosophy has departed from its ancient abstract reflexions upon the nature of reality, and abstruse cogitations upon the meaning of truth and being? Such as might have been forceful philosophers in another age are now occupied in the humbler business of evolving the significance of democracy—and this has often meant nothing higher than justifying one's own ways to men. Present-day philosophy tends to become a handmaid of advocacy to lead others to believe that our constitution is the best, and that, with possibly some minor modifications, it would form such an ideal that the world must bend to its demands and its needs, while it is also intimated that such constitution would not be universally suitable. History, actual fact, man's prejudice and partial thinking hold the field; the philosopher seems to have merged his existence with the interested political reasoner in this essentially unphilosophical inquiry and assertion.

"Will you look round not round this hall, for here indeed we have a galaxy of distinguished thinkers, have we today in the world, have we had during the past thirty years or more, any first-rate philosopher engaged in philosophising? Take England; we have not even a *Bardley* or a *Green* or a *James Ward* or a *Mac Taggart*? Is this not symptomatic? We have occasionally an odd explanation why a thinker adheres no longer to pacifism—under stress round factual facts. In other countries a similar situation prevails: philosophy ranges round factual data presented by physics and the material world, the work of remarkable thinkers typified by *Einstein* and *Plank*, and they of course have their counterparts in England, the *Jeans* and *Whittakers* of Cambridge. How is it that philosophy's own rich fields tend to become barren; there is much humdrum summing up and second-rate comment but no emergence of striking synthesis or subsumption, no

overpowering attack on the citadel of the secrets of the 'world as a whole'? In India I understand, much high class and sound history of philosophy has been successfully attempted, and some graceful exposition of doctrine achieved, but the days of creative thought seem to have gone for ever. As linguistic and literary material gathers, this tendency may be intensified. Is that not a danger against which those who have the necessary equipment must strive? The reproach has often been made that in India philosophy ceased with the ancient schools, at any rate after Sankara. Would that remain a lasting stigma on the genius of Hindustan? In the West perhaps Bergson is the greatest recent name for original thinking. Perhaps Freud forces attention in his limited field, if philosopher would receive him within their jealous portals.

"It has been said that philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point, however, is how to change it. In this endeavour the philosopher has perhaps surrendered his identity today. It is for you to pronounce whether the present well-nigh complete transformation, desire to define the ratio and the direction of the change is worthy of our great discipline or would soon be discarded, tolerated today only because of the force of circumstances."

"The name of Croce has gained prominent mention today. For sheer delightful expression, he could not be surpassed, thinking proceeds with remarkable ease, and the grace and quiet charm of his language offer lasting joy. But of him it has been said that he shares the English philosophical indifference to the insoluble questions of metaphysics. In the state of European thought, is there not chance for the Indian mind to open out and fasten on the eternal problems of philosophy? What is knowledge, does it exist, is it possible? What is existence, in what sense and measure does our perception furnish any basis for reality, its understanding lie within its purview. Are we ready to address ourselves to the high endeavour of facing the many issues of the manifold problem—perhaps to discover fresh and compelling light, may be further to thicken and embroil its complexity?

LET US NOT BE LOST IN CONTROVERSY

"Let us not be lost in the controversy—butter or guns, nor in the ingenious but at present perhaps pointless questions of the new world order. Dark things around us remain unilluminated, not a mystery cleared up, and not a disputation resolved. Man's task is unbounded while the meaning of truth, the significance of good and evil remain undefined, unsettled. Martin Luther said and the famous Burton rendered it thus: 'Where God hath a temple, the Devil will have a Chapel.' Is this the final pronouncement of philosophy, is the strife eternal and real, or merely appears to be so? Can we afford to let the world run on without ceaselessly attempting to face such eternal questions?

"Perhaps I have spoken at random and without pertinence, and deserve castigation at your hands—then my excuse would be lack of qualification to approach your mighty minds. Perhaps, I have sailed near some worthwhile considerations—then I would say, taking liberty with the poet's words, 'somewhat versed in books and shallow in himself. I have much pleasure in inaugurating this Congress."

Principal Chatterji's Address

Principal G. C. Chatterji, Vice-Chairman of the Reception Committee, extending a welcome to the delegates to the conference, said that, though the Congress session had been called in December 1942, due to circumstances created by the war over which they had no control, the Congress had to be postponed twice and it might have been postponed again this time. Due to certain restrictions on entertainments and petrol, Principal Chatterji regretted that more adequate and comfortable arrangements could not be made.

"The Punjab and its capital alike," said Principal Chatterji,—represent unorthodox India which is sick and tired of its hoary past, and which longs for a future which is free and untrammelled." Principal Chatterji further said:

"In India the introduction of democracy, combined with provincial autonomy, has resulted in increased conflict between nationalism and communalism. In Europe the challenge of Bolshevism, on the one hand, and that of Nazism, on the other, have caused a ferment in the customary ideas of social obligation and of individual morality. The menace of Japan and the heroic struggle of China for self-preservation and rejuvenation and finally the outbreak of world war No. 2 with its tale of untold misery, despair and famine, as well as that of human endurance, sacrifice and endeavour, have caused such an upheaval and shaking up of human beliefs and attitudes, that no philosophy worth the name can afford to ignore them.

I may be told that philosophy is not concerned with such mundane affairs and that its quest is the Unconditional and the Absolute. But a philosophy which does not base itself on the bed-rock of human experience, and which does not attempt to guide and illumine that experience is but a sham and a mockery. Too long have we philosophers been content with the idle web spinning of speculative systems, systems which become sacerdotal and act as clogs and fetters to the human spirit. A new age is being born around us through the travail of humanity, an age with new problems to face, new tasks to accomplish. It is for philosophy to wake up from its dogmatic slumber, and to apply the canons of critical thought to the citadels of ignorance, prejudice and error which threaten this new phase of the evolution of man. It is only when philosophy boldly faces once again the real problems of our own times, that it will win back that honoured place in the estimation of men which it has lost."

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Secretary of the Congress, introduced the President of the Congress, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, who then delivered his presidential address.

Presidential Speech

Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari said :

"Modern life suffers from racialism in social life, sectional thinking in science, nationalism in politics and fanaticism in religion. What is sorely needed to day is a new synoptic outlook that will combine the seriousness of the thinker with the social virtues of the man of action, break down the barriers of department thinking and exclusiveness, heal all discords and given a new spiritual direction to society."

"The moral genius of India has recognised the reality of moral evil in its individual and social aspects, and has shown the way of overcoming it by love and by self-suffering. Evil by contact with good becomes sterile and self-destructive and thus gives rise to the reign of universal love. The modern 'yogi' of India insists on a new integration of divine life in which there will be a gradual ascent to supra-mental life as well as a descent into the physical life with a view to spiritualise it. He has a vision of a universal transformation of society as a whole in the future by the descent of divine life on earth and the creation of a new race of super-spiritual men. The religious prophet of India lived and realised the truths of various religions and heralded a new age in which all religions will be harmonised without losing their individuality. The Indian philosophers to-day with their synthetic thinking and synoptic vision have already attempted a new orientation of Indian thought by utilising the best thoughts of the West and interpreting the West to the East and the East to the West and thus bringing about a better understanding between them. India's service to the world is the gift of her spirituality. In the words of one of India's leading philosophers, the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity have a deep spiritual meaning. The freedom of man is the freedom of the self-development of divinity in man. The equality of men implies the recognition of the same Godhead in all human beings, and the ideal of brotherhood is a unity of mind and feeling based upon the inner spirituality of man. Thus the political ideals of the west can be spiritualised. Freedom in the positive sense is to be utilised by the free man in the service of the ideals of world-welfare by his renouncing the egoistic and individualistic outlook. All men are equal in the sense that they have the same divine destiny. This view furnishes the most inspiring motive for intellectual co-operation and inter-religious understanding so necessary for realising the ideal of the federation of the world. Such a consummation can never be achieved unless mankind gives up its present antagonisms based on differences of race, culture and religion. It is up to the Indian philosopher with his age-long tradition for solving world problems to face the present confusion, examine its causes, and point the way out of it.

Continuing the President said, the Song on the Chariot in Kurukshetra, true to the synthetic genius of India, was a call to the philosopher to be not only a spectator but also a man of action participating in the battle of life and working for world welfare. In every world war which is really a warfare of ideals, the Indian philosopher has always fought in defence of the ancient world heritage of spiritual culture and the re-establishment of its synthetic ideal.

The best way of retaining the soul power of India is to keep alive her synthetic philosophic outlook by removing the barriers of isolation and exclusiveness on the one hand, and the evils of the slavish imitation of alien ideas on the other. Science has destroyed distance only in the physical sense but not in the philosophic and

spiritual sense. It is only philosophy applied to practical life that can really bring men together and make them live a new spiritual joint-family life. Philosophy in India is not divorced from life but has always permeated everyday life. What is now required is not more philosophy, but more philosophers, who would, as heirs of India's cultural heritage, consecrate their lives to the pursuit of philosophic thinking and set an inspiring example to others in their views and ways of life.

The social philosophy of today reveals the tragic fact that culture and civilisation are on the very verge of collapse owing to the decadence of faith in the moral values of life and the dignity of personality. The evolutionary theory of the survival of the fittest affords a scientific and moral justification for the growth of the evils of cut-throat competition in all walks of life, and dictatorships or the rule of supermen with their will to enslave humanity. The gospel of material progress based on the triumphs of modern science has reduced man to a machine and a mere item in the programme of exploitation. The machine created by man has become a menace to his very being, the idea that the State is an end in itself and is beyond moral laws and that the individual is only a means to an end has undermined the foundations of true democracy and self-rule. The theory of chosen races and religions has increased racial bitterness and religious fanaticism. Religiosity has taken the place of religion and dogmas and rituals masquerade as spiritual faith; and religion itself is regarded as a morbid obsession. Psycho-analysis has exaggerated the meaning of the sexual instinct as an all-powerful but repressed feeling clamouring for satisfaction, and made sex training and education in nastiness and licence. Society itself is threatened with extinction by the total war that rages everywhere and some thinkers say that life is now decadent and will soon be destroyed. It is the supreme task of the philosopher to restore the higher ideals of life and reconstruct society on a moral and spiritual basis.

Professor A. R. Wadia, the outgoing President, thanked *Sir Manohar Lal*, who, he said, also inaugurated the Congress Session 14 years ago in Lahore.

"*Sir Manohar Lal* is a shining light among the economists", he said, "but he is certainly one of us as a philosopher in spite of him."

Indian Debate in Parliament

House of Lords—London 20th. October 1943

Food Situation In India

The House of Lords held a debate on the food situation in India on the 20th. October 1943.

The *Earl of Huntingdon* (Labour) asked Government whether they had any further statement to make regarding the famine conditions in certain provinces in India, and what steps would be taken to relieve the situation. He quoted published figures of starvation cases and deaths in Calcutta, and said that in country districts, mortality figures were difficult to get, but the famine was acute. "In fact," he said, "the strugglings of starving people into the cities is, I understand, one of the gravest complications to be faced by the authorities. I have no wish to give any more of these harrowing figures, which are enough, I think, to confirm the dreadful stories of starvation and misery which are coming from India to-day especially the Deccan, Cochin, Travancore, and particularly Bengal."

Lord Huntingdon spoke of a big increase of prices and said there was shortage not only of grain and rice, but also of milk. In fact, food stocks of all kinds seemed to be in great scarcity and at exorbitant prices. Whenever food was very short, cholera made its appearance.

After giving figures of the number of cases, Lord Huntingdon referred to grim stories of patients not wishing to be cured from cholera because their only alternative would be a long-drawn out death from starvation. But without such stories, the figures themselves were enough to stir one's imagination and show how appalling the conditions in India to-day must be. "When confronted with such a situation, the major concern of all of us must be firstly to express our deepest sympathy with the Indian people and particularly with sufferers from these terrible conditions in Bengal and other areas in India, and secondly what measures of relief can be brought to these people and how quickly." "It was with great thankfulness that many of us heard that food-ships were on their way to India, but I am sure everyone in the House must really feel that more drastic measures are essential if we are going to deal with this acute crisis. I ask Government whether they can give us any fresh news of the situation and also what steps are being taken now and can be taken to deal with the crisis. I would also ask whether more grain cannot be shipped from Australia or even from the United States and if some army reserves could not be released—a greater amount of it—to feed the civil population. This could later be replenished from further arrivals of grain. I should like to urge on the Government that shipping food for to-day is a vital war need.

Examining the causes of the disastrous conditions Lord Huntingdon said, his object was to find out future remedies, if possible, and stopping any recurrence of such a major disaster. Lord Huntingdon said, the Gregory Committee's report had suggested that the loss of Burma rice was a very strong contributory cause. It had to be remembered, however, that the rice imported from Burma amounted to about one and a half million tons, of which less than a hundred thousand tons annually went to Bengal. Thus the situation could not be completely attributed to the loss of Burma rice. The cyclone in Bengal in 1942 and the failure of the monsoon in Madras were other contributory causes. On the other hand, these losses were largely made good by exceptional crops in Northern India in the spring of 1943. Grain bought for the army and army reserves must also be a contributory cause. Moreover, there was the fact that the Indian as a soldier eats very much more than the Indian as a civilian can afford. "Looking at the whole situation, it would seem not to be so much an absolute shortage of foodstuffs as a complete breakdown in distribution."

With increasing prices, the terrible poverty of the Indian peasant left a very small margin between subsistence and starvation. "It stands to reason that a nation that is so reduced in poverty as to have cow-dung for fuel, instead of using it for manure is, one might say, well on the road to committing race suicide...Many people are worried over this point: why was that situation, which was foreseen a long time ago and was developing for months, allowed to grow, why did not the Central Government of India take the profoundest measures before the famine reached this disastrous extent and the situation became completely out of hand."

CENTRAL GOVT.'S FAILURE

Referring to Mr. Amery's remark at Birmingham last week that the dangerous possibilities of the situation were fully realised soon after the loss of Singapore and Burma, Lord Huntingdon said the loss of Singapore was some time ago. Why were none of the measures advocated in the Gregory report put into operation? The problem was so obviously an all-India one that it could have been dealt with only by the Central Government. Mr. Amery in the same speech, suggested what the reason was, the Central Government's reluctance to encroach on the Provincial Government's functions. The ultimate power rested with the British Government just as the final and ultimate power in the Central Government rested with the Viceroy. "These powers are immense. We have seen the Central Government's powers exercised in a most drastic and sweeping way, pushing everything aside, very recently. But why, in this case, were not drastic reforms instituted by the Central Government in the welfare of millions or at least hundreds of thousands of Indians, dependent on the measures being taken?"

After referring to the absence of sympathy and co-operation on the part of the Indian people with any scheme originating from the British Government, Lord Huntingdon said: "If we are to cope with this famine, I would earnestly press that the problem of the future of India should be brought out of cold storage and we should again attempt to thaw Indian mistrust by sympathy and generous understanding in this crisis."

"UNITED NATIONS MUST GUARANTEE INDIA'S FREEDOM"

"Once we have won the confidence and friendship of the Indian people, half the problems connected with the famine will be solved. Public opinion in India could be brought to support any scheme of regulation. Leaders of different parties, if given the chance, could induce farmers and merchants to release their stocks. The public would be prepared to make any sacrifices demanded of them. Confidence would be difficult to create, but a gesture to prove the integrity of our aim might succeed. For this gesture, I am going to suggest the British Government might, as it were, declare India to be in a state of trust or wardship. She would be as it were, a ward in democracy. We should ask our great Allies to join with us in guaranteeing India's future freedom. Inter-Allied co-operation, now envisaged in high places as the basis for world peace, is so vast and so thorough that I do not think it will be impossible for us to ask the United States, the Soviet Union and China to act with great Britain as guardian who will jointly be responsible for India's present welfare and guarantee her future freedom. With her future freedom thus guaranteed, the distrust of Indians of all parties might be dispelled and leaders might be able to co-operate in the most drastic scheme for fighting this battle against famine. Again in this mutual co-operation, Indian leaders might be prepared to work not only to fight the famine but also in the prosecution of the war. Such a beginning might be the first step to India's working together to find a basis for the future constitutional Government of their own country. The security of the Pacific Front and above all necessities of humanity demand that the Indian people must be saved from the disaster which is threatening to engulf them."

FAILURE OF TRANSPORT MAIN CAUSE

Lord Catto (Liberal National) said Lord Huntingdon had wandered somewhat from the terms of the motion into the political aspect of the question.

"I don't propose to follow him in that because, quite candidly, I don't know what he meant by the "ward of democracy," and I doubt very much whether any of my Indian friends would understand such an expression. We are not discussing the merits or the demerits of constitutional arrangements in India, or even how or why this calamity has fallen upon a poor people. We are discussing how best to relieve them in the quickest possible time. The part of India chiefly concerned is one I know well and I can speak on this matter with strong feelings. The famine is a preventable thing. After saying that the horror of famine in India from which she had suffered from the dawn of her history, had become almost a thing of the past through the great efficiency of relief organisation, Lord Catto declared that relief measures had proved inadequate because the manifold difficulties of internal and external war-time transport were not sufficiently taken into account."

Lord Catto concluded: "We are not discussing this matter only because of its humanitarian aspect. We are discussing it because we have direct responsibility. By the constitution, the British Parliament is responsible for the welfare and good government of India. We are part of that Parliament and we share that responsibility."

Lord Hailey said it is the opinion of economists that hitherto the increase in India's production had preserved a somewhat responsible ratio to the increasing population. It had left a very narrow margin to deal with an emergency of crop failure, but it had not left India in a state of normal sufficiency. India had been able in the last ten years to deal with larger shortages. Clearly, the cause has been internal maladjustment in reference to transport, profiteering and hoarding. There could only be one solution in the present situation—some drastic measure to control all prices of foodstuffs and force them on to the market. The Government of India had taken such powers. The Punjab in particular was still very far from being in a mood to co-operate. It was clear a situation had been allowed to go on which, though it might be bettered by vigorous administrative measures, would continue to present a grave difficulty until the prices were brought altogether nearer the normal by the importation of rice from Burma and the possibility of the importation of wheat from Australia or Canada. Looking back, he thought, they could fairly say that the Bengal Government certainly did not show itself sufficiently farseeing or sufficiently active at an early stage of the situation. "Its attitude seems to us to compare unfavourably with that of Bombay and Madras in circumstances not entirely dissimilar. If any criticism of the Central Government can be justified, it is on the grounds that it showed undue hesitation in putting sufficient pressure on the non-co-operative provinces."

Lord Hailey said he joined with *Lord Catto* in deprecating any suggestion of a gesture to India such as *Earl Huntingdon* had proposed. "India has only one objective and one ambition and that is independence. Ward trusteeship as used by us is in very little favour in Indian political circles. I doubt whether the association of our Allies or the United Nations in the form of the guarantee suggested or the joint assumption by them of trusteeship for India would be any more satisfactory to India than it would be flattering to us. But looking to the future, there is certainly one lesson which sticks out. There could be no stronger argument than that provided by these events to prove the inadvisability of the fragmentation of India which would inevitably result from such schemes as that for the creation of a separate dominion consisting of Moslem provinces."

MASTERLY DEFENCE OF INACTION

Lord Strabolgi said: "I congratulate the Government on the masterly defence that had just been made by *Lord Hailey*. I most respectfully congratulate *Lord Hailey* himself. I never remember hearing so masterly a defence of inaction and indecision, no more competent finding of reasons why nothing could be done and what that it was inevitable and I cannot withhold my personal admiration of his speech." *Lord Strabolgi* said *Lord Hailey* informed us that India was self-supporting in food. *Lord Strabolgi* thought however that it was correct at the present time to say that if we had not come, India could only have been self-supporting in foodstuffs. If we had accepted the inadequate standard of diet for a very large proportion of the Indian population, *Lord Strabolgi* added: "The unfortunate fact is that considerable quantities of food had to be exported from India for war purposes to the middle East. It went out because it was a normal thing to do and unless there was some strong hand at the Centre as *Lord Hailey* says will always be needed to stop these exports and insist on the forces in the Middle East getting foodstuffs from elsewhere, then you are bound to have this trouble."

Lord Strabolgi said, "I have here a telegram received yesterday morning in answer to a cable sent by a friend of mine to a gentleman whom *Lord Hailey* knows very well—*Martin Harlinh*, special correspondent of *Reuters* in New Delhi. He was asked about this question of exports. If I trouble you with the telegram and particularly recommend it to the attention of *Lord Hailey* it reads as follows—this was an independent source. *Reuter's* chief correspondent is impartial and he knows all facts—"In the early part of this year, the Indian Government realising the possibilities for food shortage pressed for large imports of food into India and received 150 000 tons. This was only a part of the amount asked for. With operations in North Africa and with U-boat sinkings the position became acute and in view of these facts, coupled with the bumper harvest in the Punjab, the Government decided not to press for further imports. It is now admitted that this was a serious mistake. The Government's next step in July was to appoint a committee to work out a long term food policy and the report of the Committee was presented to the Government at the end of September and its recommendation can be summed up as (1)—import of food; (2)—rationing; (3)—drastic tightening up of the machinery

for acquisition of food; (4)—drastic revision of rationing in the provinces; and (5) statutory price control.

[Lord Strabolgi later told *Reuter* that he had been misinformed in stating that the telegram referred to by him as having been sent by *Martin Herlihy* was sent to a private individual. In point of fact the message was issued in *Reuter's News Service*.]

BUREAUCRACY'S FAILURE

After referring to the message of *Reuter's* special correspondent in New Delhi, *Martin Herlihy*, Lord Strabolgi said, "I am afraid it discloses what indeed was implicit in the defence of Lord Hailey." Lord Strabolgi added: "Once more we see this fatal disease of bureaucracy—procrastination." They started too late, set up too many committees, thought too long what they were going to do and in the meantime this horror man of famine was galloping along. To show how dilatory was not only the Bengal Government but the Central Government in dealing with this matter, between January 1, this year and March 15, from Bengal alone, to fight the loss of Burma rice, 300,000 tons of rice was exported."

Lord Hailey interjected: "That has been denied."

Lord Strabolgi: "It was said in the Bengal Legislature. If it has been denied I am very glad to hear it.

Lord Hailey: "It was officially denied by the Government of India that there had been this alleged export of 300,000 tons of rice from Bengal."

Lord Strabolgi added, in addition to the large number of soldiers, Indian and European, there was another cause—enormous number of Indian labourers working for the Government on the various schemes who also had to be fed.

"Thank Heavens, Lord Wavell has arrived in Delhi," continued Lord Strabolgi. "There is a man used to dealing with realities, a proved organiser and he at any rate will, I hope, be supported in taking the most drastic steps to deal with this famine." Lord Strabolgi urged the release of some of the army foodstocks to feed these starving people and use the army to administer the distribution of foodstuffs and provide transport as well.

Lord Strabolgi said he thought the Japanese propaganda that they would feed Bengal with rice released from Burma was probably nonsense because he understood that in Burma, the Japanese methods had so upset the cultivators that there was shortage of rice in Burma. The whole trouble has been lack of action on the part of the Bengal Government. There is the new Viceroy and we all wish him well. I feel that if he is supported by the India Office, he will accomplish great things.

Replying to the debate, Lord Munster, *Under-Secretary of State for India*, defended the India Government against the charges levelled against it and stated that "it would be contrary to all the facts in this very complicated story to assume that the Government of India was content to do absolutely nothing until the situation had developed into the serious dimensions that we see to-day." He referred also to the reluctance of the Central Government to encroach on the powers of the provinces unless "a province had failed to co-operate in handling the food problem to such an extent that the war effort was seriously affected."

Lord Munster said: "I have no wish myself to be drawn into the future constitutional problems which may confront India and I shall therefore, reserve my remarks entirely for this very highly complicated question. I should like to record my deep and sincere sympathy with the Indian people in this dire misfortune that has come upon them."

Dealing with the fundamentals of the food problem, Lord Munster said, "Despite the increased acreage which is now under cultivation, the amount of foodstuffs available per head has, in consequence of the vast increase in population, remained practically stationary from year to year".....Should anything occur to disturb the normal flow of trade between the small subsistent farmer and the great urban population, a man-made artificial famine is at once created, a famine quite distinct in every way from that caused by the failure of crops over which mankind has little or no control. At the moment, Bengal is enduring both forms of disaster—man-made and natural."

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE CENTRE

Turning to the question of responsibility of His Majesty's Government, the Government of India and the Provincial Governments, Lord Munster said: "It is a substantial and important point, this question of duties which fall to each of those authorities under the Act of Parliament. Any of you who know India will not forget that under the existing Constitution—leaving aside for the moment the Indian

States of a greatly differing size and wealth—the Indian Empire is made up of eleven Provinces, some as great as the principal European countries, to whom certain responsibilities have been allotted to enable them to function as autonomous units, in many respects practically fully self-governing. Provincial Governments under the Government of India Act of 1935 are responsible for, among other matters, agricultural development and for the production and distribution of foodstuffs. In fact the House will see they are primarily responsible for the execution and carrying out of any common food policy in India than that provided by the administrative organisations of the Provinces and States. It is true the Central Government has certain powers of co-ordination and has used them to give advice, assistance and help to the autonomous Provinces but for the functions of Government which have been devolved on the Provinces it has no administrative agency of its own and it must, therefore, depend on the machinery which is in existence in the Provinces. That is the position at the present time in all the Provinces and of course in the States too.

"Let me now pass on to the Central Government and explain the position it has occupied: The Government of India has special war time powers which enable it to override Provincial Governments if necessary to secure that Provincial action conforms to all India requirements. These powers were, I venture to think, not granted by Parliament with the purpose of coercing Provincial administration who in the performance of their proper provincial functions seemed over anxious to protect the interests of their own population or failed to move at that speed which might have been expected of them. They were granted for use in time of emergency and when India was threatened by war. That is the governing situation. But it would be an extreme measure to use these power to deal even in wartime with a problem of these nature. It may perhaps be said that the granting of provincial autonomy has resulted in lessening the efficiency as viewed from the All-Indian standpoint but that is no reason why the Central Government should encroach on the provincial responsibilities except in the most exceptional circumstances. If it should prove that a Province has failed to co-operate in handling the food problem to such an extent that the war effort was seriously affected, then the Central Government would be justified in using these powers. But I think myself that it would be an unhappy development if the Government of India were to exert these powers and brush aside responsible democratically based Governments, whenever an ugly situation threatened or developed in a particular province.

"I ask myself this question: What is the first task of any democratic Government? Surely it is to look after and safeguard the well-being and interests of all people, both the majority and minorities, and most elected Governments are usually deeply sensible of this responsibility. I should have thought myself that it is quite clear that the Central Government has adopted the only possible course short of the extreme measures I have mentioned, because it has continually and earnestly sought to obtain the loyal co-operation of the Provinces. It would be contrary to all the facts in this very complicated story to assume that the Government of India was content to do absolutely nothing until the situation had developed into the serious dimensions that we see to-day.

BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY

Dealing with the position of His Majesty's Government, Lord Munster said, "Quite apart from our statutory and constitutional responsibilities that we retain for securing the safety of the peoples of India, it would be our natural wish at all times to render every conceivable form of assistance and help to all our partners within the Empire, whatever their precise and constitutional position, wherever they may be situated, and whatever the cost. That wish of course is magnified in times of great tribulation and need. Loyalty to the Empire implies an obligation on the part of all of us, a natural safeguard of common interests and recognition of the duty of mutual assistance to one another. The problem then so far as we are concerned, here at home, in the matter of internal administration in order to secure an effective distribution within India, is limited entirely to the provision of shipping for carrying food supplies that India requires from outside sources. I think it is hardly necessary for me to remind the House of the many calls that are made upon us in this matter of shipping. We have to judge in the light of all relevant factors and all other urgent demands of the United Nations and allot shipping here and there as and where it can be of most use and assistance to the war effort. I am happy to think that the efforts we have made have not been without some considerable degree of success and considerable quantities of foodgrains are now

arriving in ships which have been diverted to meet the pressing need of food shortage in certain districts of India."

INDIA GOVT'S "MEASURES

After referring to the measures taken by the Government of India and the unforeseen difficulties when they came to consult the provinces on the quantity of surplus foodgrains available, Lord Munster said that despite the excellent wheat harvest in North-West India it became obvious in the middle of this year that the basic plan had not provided sufficient remedy to meet the difficulties of the more hard pressed areas and therefore an amendment was found necessary to this plan. In normal peacetime, imports of foodstuffs into India spread throughout the period of twelve months, amounted to about two-and-half per cent of the total consumption. The situation therefore, differed fundamentally from the position in Britain where by far the greater amount of foodstuffs were imported and price control of vital commodities could easily be instituted without great difficulty. The basic plan did deal with price control but it was believed its effective operation would bring foodgrains on to the market at reasonable prices.

During the early months of last year, the Central Government instituted the grow-more food campaign which brought an additional eight million acres under foodcrops last year, and would probably bring twelve million acres this year. This would normally have met the deficiencies following the fall of Burma, but unfortunately it did not. The Central Government had and was continually and energetically devoting itself to the food problem. Last July, the Government appointed a committee and Provincial Governments' special representatives could make representations on what was described as a longterm food policy. That Committee reported at the end of last month to the Government of India. We received a telegram late last night explaining that the decision included a new and revised edition of the basic plan for managing provincial surpluses and deficits.

As regards prices, statutory price control, both for foodgrains and other commodities, was to be established, ultimately being built up on provincial and regional basis. Provincial control of prices was, meanwhile, to be subject to Central approval. Full rationing of towns with a population of over one hundred thousand was accepted as fundamental. If this scheme worked well, it would prevent a recurrence of this famine which had caused so much anxiety among us.

CAUSES OF BENGAL CRISIS

Explaining the reasons for the shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal, Lord Munster said, "The present unhappy situation which has developed is due to a variety of reasons. The loss of Burma has its repercussions upon Bengal and other districts in India. But the Provincial Government was not seriously alarmed at that time because there were reserves of stocks from an excellent crop which had come on the market at the beginning of the year and were in the hands of a number of traders and cultivators. Cyclone and floods occurred in rice-growing areas in Bengal and destroyed not only a portion of the coming season's crop but also resulted in the loss of some of the reserve stock held by the traders and cultivators. As a result of this the last harvest was poor with probably a 25 per cent reduction in the quantity of the former years. The distribution of foodstuffs was also hampered by a lack of small craft which had been removed by the board's denial policy instituted at the time of the threatened invasion from Burma. In addition the railways in Eastern India were carrying immense quantities of military personnel and equipment. All this aggravated the case and caused a shortage in the reduction and distribution of foodstuffs. The traders in all crops tended to board in the hope of obtaining a substantial rise in prices and the cultivators were reluctant to dispose of any surplus they held for the fear of having to buy back at a higher price, if the famine conditions spread or the next harvest failed. Thus the position as a whole was accentuated by the loss of Burma, by adverse supply positions, by fear of invasion which at that time was very much alive, and by lack of any marketable surplus through hoarding and withholding of stocks for speculative reasons."

Lord Munster then recalled the measures taken to deal with the crisis since August and said: "The Central Government has treated this question as a matter of first-class importance and has taken a number of steps to assist the Bengal Government. Arrangements have been made for the running of special food trains daily to carry foodgrains from North-West India to Calcutta and beyond. Deliveries of foodgrains to Bengal since the beginning of April on Government account has amounted to 181,000 tons of rice and 194,000 tons of other foodgrains. During the month of September, deliveries amounted to 72,000 tons."

"We must and, of course, are making every effort to remedy the situation as quickly as it is humanly possible to do so. We must endeavour to return to normal conditions without any undue delay. The rice crop has already been harvested and it should carry Bengal through the new year when the winter rice crop, which is the main crop of Bengal, will come on to the market."

Lord Munster concluded, "May I be so bold as to conclude my remarks by referring to a matter which does concern this House and indeed concerns the country at large? I refer of course to the appointment of Field Marshal Lord Wavell as Viceroy and Governor-General of India. I feel sure you will naturally wish to express your best wishes to the noble Viscount in the gigantic task which he has undertaken. It is, I think, one further indication of his willingness to serve his country in whatever position he can render most useful service. This, perhaps, is not the time to refer to the work performed for 7½ long and arduous years, four years of which we have been at war, by the noble Marquis of Linlithgow who will shortly be among us again, but I must say that fortune has not been kind to him during the last few remaining months of his Viceroyship. The hideous spectre of famine has raised its ugly head in spite of the many remedial measures which he took and had undertaken to relieve it. Nevertheless we are grateful to the noble Marquis for the loyal, long and very distinguished service he has given to us and to our great Indian Empire."

Expressing his thanks to *Lord Munster* for his reply, *Lord Huntingdon* said: "I cannot agree with *Lord Munster* in his remarks about emergency powers. I understood those powers were given to Government for use in any wartime emergency. Surely this famine is about as great an emergency as we could possibly come up against. May I express agreement with *Lord Hailey* about the importance of price control? May I express the gratitude of all members on this side of the House on hearing that grain ships and relief are going to India and I hope the Government will continue every effort to fight this dreadful famine."

House of Commons—London—4th. November 1943

Food Situation in India

After reading for many days past the harrowing account of distress caused by the Bengal famine, members of Parliament assembled to-day (Thursday) to debate the situation. Some came in a very critical frame of mind, following the revelations in the recent White Paper, but all were more interested in finding food for Indians than in finding scapegoats for the breakdown in supplies.

The attendance, both on the floor of the House and in the galleries, was mainly composed of people with special interest in India. *Mrs. Amery*, wife of the Secretary of State, was in the Speaker's gallery. A number of Indians were among the visitors.

The chief Labour speaker, *Mr. Frederick Pethick Lawrence*, opening the common debate, said that though nearly all his political life he had been a student of the Indian situation, he could not pretend to a full and complete knowledge and background possessed by many members of the House of Commons. "My sense of responsibility is increased by the fact that I realise that in opening this debate I am not only speaking to members of this House, but also to the people of India and in a sense to the people of the whole world. I am very sensible of the risk of letting slip one word that might come in the way of dealing with the very important question of famine itself or in our relationship with that continent of India. We have a new Viceroy with great imagination who has already shown his deep interest in this matter of famine by his action and I should be very loath indeed if anything I said to-day could be regarded as queering the pitch in attempting to solve or mitigate, at any rate, the great disaster which has taken place in parts of India. This House is ultimately responsible. If this terrible death rate had occurred in any part of the British Isles, the member who sits for that locality would be vociferous in demanding that something should be done. He would not allow any member of Government to rest while these terrible things were happening and the House, every day and all day, would be continuously confronted with the need for a drastic remedy. In this House there are no actual members for that immense part of the British Empire, the sub-continent of India, and that fact must not be allowed for one moment to let this House, responsible at it is for India, forget its grave responsibility."

"PARLIAMENT ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE"

"There is a sense in which we are members for India and we have all that duty to perform so that in the last resort it is we here, in this House, who are

responsible for what takes place. If there has been lack of imagination in the handling of this problem, lack of initiative, and failure to take full cognisance of facts and bring the best remedy to bear, we in this House are ultimately responsible and we cannot shirk that responsibility. If, as a result of our enquiry, any conclusions should be reached, we must not hesitate for one moment to carry them into effect, however distasteful they may be and even if they involve personalities, those in high places, we must not shirk from the consequences (hear, hear).

"The explanations that have been given are that it was an act of God in giving a bad harvest in certain parts of India, that it was the King's enemies in the shape of cutting off supply from Burma and other parts of the Far East to India : that it was the creating of dual responsibility brought about by the passage of the India Act and the reluctance of the provinces with surpluses to sell them to full extent that might have relieved shortage. It was also said to be due to individual hoarding ; to difficulty of transport, external and internal, and on one or two occasions, Mr. Amery has mentioned the matter of inflation. It would be quite unfair to Mr. Amery to suggest that he faces with complacency or anything like complacency the tragic events in India. Mr. Amery, he said, is greatly troubled by what has taken place and taking place to-day. But having brought into review at various times all the adverse circumstances with which the Government of India has been confronted he feels that if they have failed, and they have failed, that failure is not a dishonourable one. Like a swimmer who battles nobly and fails to make land, they are to be pitied and not blamed for what has taken place.

"But let us be quite candid with ourselves, that is not the view taken by a very large number of our Indian fellow subjects." It was not the view taken in the United States nor by himself. He had no desire to oversimplify the problem and did not dispute any contributory and extenuating causes detailed by Mr. Amery on many occasions. "But having said that, I still think our Government of India—including in that expression all our acting personnel both here and in India—must take a substantial share of the blame for what has taken place. In my view that arises because they are directly responsible for what are the main causes of the trouble."

MAIN CAUSE OF FAMINE

Mr. Lawrence referred to the visit he had paid to India 40 or 50 years ago during which there was a local famine. At that time there was plenty of food in India, but the main cause of starvation of certain individuals in that particular area was that they were without the means to buy the food they needed. It had been one of the great triumphs of the Government of India that in recent years up to the present disaster, famine had been almost unknown (cheers). He thought the main cause of the present famine was the same—large numbers of people in certain provinces had not got the purchasing power to pay for such food grains as would keep them alive.

The main cause of this increase in price was inflation. For the inflation, the Government of India and nobody else could be held responsible. He did not think Mr. Amery would dispute that inflation was, at any rate, one of the causes—he would say one of the main causes of the present situation. Mr. Amery had stated on October 21 in reply to a question that inflation was a contributory cause. "We may differ as to the degree of importance which is attached to this particular thing but as a fact it has been a contributory cause. If any evidence is wanted on inflation—and I am using the word inflation deliberately as distinct from the rise in prices caused by other means—I think it is more or less proved by the fact that increase in prices is not confined to food grains but extends, as far as I can learn, throughout all commodities, though not precisely to the same extent. My information is that the general index has risen something in the nature of three hundred per cent." The things the farmer wanted to buy had increased in price from 400 to 500 percent : food grains 500 to 700 per cent and specific commodities as much as 900 per cent.

Lord Winterton (Conservative), interposing, asked if there had been any rise in the wages.

Another member wanted to know if the figures were for India as a whole or only Bengal.

MEASURES TO COMBAT INFLATION INADEQUATE

Mr. Pethick Lawrence replied that Mr. Amery himself had disclaimed any ability to give the general level of prices. One of the disadvantages to which the House was subjected at present was the difficulty to get information which was not official. The same answer applied to what Earl Winterton said : Frankly, I

don't know what the level of rise in the wages is. None can possibly tell what was the general rise in prices without careful investigation, which only the Government of India could have carried out. Perhaps later in the debate, Government will answer that question." "There is no mystery as to what caused inflation. Of course it is perfectly true that there has been a certain amount of debt repatriation and that is as far as it goes. But it has not gone to the full extent necessary in order to prevent inflation. I do not see how the Secretary of State can possibly deny responsibility for this. It is not a matter of the Provincial Government." He said he could not see how *Sir John Anderson* could deny it, particularly seeing that he is the head of the Treasury which, under his predecessor, had been most careful in avoiding inflation in this country. "But the Government of India has not taken the same care regarding inflation that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken in Britain." He appreciated that the Indian Government were missing a very courageous, able and wise man in *Sir Henry Strakosch* who died in the last few days after an illness of two years. Without disparaging merits of *Prof. Gregory*, he was not a man of the financial experience and calibre of *Sir Henry Strakosch*.

Referring to the shortage of harvest of grain crops in India during 1943, *Mr. Lawrence* said it had been increased by the stoppage of imports from wheat zones. Government were really the only people responsible for bringing the remedy, because the local provinces could not deal with the matters of export or import of grain. "That is a matter which must be dealt with by the Central Government and has no doubt been decided by the Central Government in India all through."

PLEA TO SUBSIDISE FOOD PRICES

Turning to the question of remedies, *Mr. Lawrence* said, although it was wrong to meet inflation with deflation it was certainly not wrong to stop further inflation and that was the first problem confronting Government. Steps must be taken to cut of the surplus purchasing power either by taxation or loans. It might be necessary to subsidise prices of food. He thought some form of rationing should be instituted in others part of India as had been done with some substantial success by the Government of Bombay. Exports must be stopped and not restarted until the food situation in India was on a much firmer basis. There must be imports on as large a scale as possible. He would suggest to the War Cabinet that the result of the famine in India may be equivalent of a military defeat. He wanted to say a few tentative words—and he emphasised tentative political aspect. *Mr. Lawrence* said he was afraid they could not get out of their minds that unhappy political divisions in India had not made it easier to solve this intricate problem, but he noticed that *Mr. Jinnah* on October 31 had made a statement to which no exception could be taken. It was couched in words that would not give offence and was designed to help rather than hinder. If some method could be found of enlisting the co-operation of all sections in the humanitarian work of alleviating and ultimately bringing to an end the famine conditions in India he hoped it would not be lightly rejected.

Mr. Leopold Amery, Secretary of State for India, speaking next, said he thought the whole House was obliged to *Mr. Pethick Lawrence* for a most temperate and fair analysis of the nature of the problem with which they were confronted. He did not think that he differed from him on a single point of that analysis, though possibly he might have given a slightly different emphasis to some of the facts. "In any case, I would echo what he said at the beginning of his remarks, namely, that it was only right and fitting that this House should devote attention not only to this immediate and grievous calamity with which the unhappy people of Bengal are faced and the people of some other districts of India but also to the anxious general economic situation in India as a whole. I undoubtedly agree with him there.

"I might add that the problem is one of even wider dimensions. Only the other day, *Lord Woolton* told us that we are running into world shortage. Since then, *Mr. Wallace*, Vice-President of America, has declared that food will be a dominant problem in 1944, that the output will not begin to meet the overwhelming demands of 1945 and that proper organisation to meet a common world food crisis beforehand is a question of life or death for millions. The breakdown of Nazi tyranny in Europe may well confront us with an appalling situation. This wider problem is rightly engaging the attention of the United Nations. Meanwhile as *Mr. Pethick Lawrence* has insisted, we have our own more direct responsibility.

"In the case of India, we undoubtedly have a constitutional responsibility of which we have not divested ourselves even if in a large measure we have transferred legal powers and the actual working machinery of Government to Indian hands. In any case, we are concerned with the suffering of men, women and fellow citizens of the Empire whom it is our duty to help and succour to the best of our ability in time of danger and distress. I hope the House will bear with me if I go in some detail into the economic background and past history of the present situation.

"This Bengai famine is something more than an isolated incident. It is a danger signal, warning us of long-range measures which are needed as well as immediate relief. The vast majority of the population of India have always been and still are subsistence cultivators. They wring a meagre and precarious existence from their small holdings, and only the need for finding a little ready money for rent, for payment of debts and for purchase of the very minimum of necessities and petty luxuries leads them to sell such narrow margin of surplus food as they can manage somehow or other to do without. It is from this narrow and fluctuating margin from over fifty million small holdings from which urban and industrial India has to be fed. In former times, famine in India, as in China, was endemic extending to smaller or larger areas whenever failure of monsoon rains or floods or cyclones led to local or general crop shortage.

INCREASE IN POPULATION

Under British rule, the construction of over 40,000 miles of railway and vast irrigation projects and not the least the ever present availability in peacetime of shipping have enabled supplies to be rushed to deficit areas. As my friend pointed out in his interesting reminiscences, in that case the immediate problem in the famine area was to find money for relief works and otherwise to enable starving peasants to survive. With the help of these balancing factors and of a highly developed organisation for famine relief, Indian authorities have in recent times been able to keep in check the ever present menace of local famine. But these measures, coupled with such other factors as improved health conditions, have only contributed to that unexampled pressure of the population against means of subsistence which is the gravest long-range problem which India has to face. In the last 12 years, the population of India has gone up by some 60 million. Every month there are over 300,000 additional mouths to be fed in British India alone.

"Members will have read in the White Paper a review of the situation by *Sir Azizul Haque*, who till the other day was Food Member of the Viceroy's Council. *Sir Azizul* spoke with all the authority of one who has not only filled in the Bengal Assembly the high position which you, Sir, hold in this House, but who as himself a son of the soil has devoted most of his life to the cause of the Bengal peasantry. He pointed out that the annual production of rice per head in Bengal had gone down over the last 30 years from 384 pounds to 283 pounds as a result of the increase of the population in that one province alone of over one million a year in the last decade. Part of the increase is no doubt accounted for by the growth of urban and industrial Bengal. But the main increase has been in agricultural districts, where in some cases the population runs to over 2,000 to a square mile and is reflected in the growing fragmentation of peasants' holdings which now average only three and a half acres. We in this country are faced by the great problem of an imminent shrinkage of the population below the optimum required for the maintenance of our standard of living and of our social and international obligation. In India the gravest problem in future will be to find ways and means by improved agricultural methods, by industrialisation, and by education, somehow or other to outstrip the pressure of the population which leaves so little a margin of surplus, whether for individual standard of life or for financing social reform.

IMPACT OF WAR

"I would now ask the House to consider what impact the war has made on so precariously balanced an economic structure. India has played an immensely important part in this war. She has raised nearly two million men for her army, all volunteers. I need not remind the House of the part which Indian Divisions have played both in saving and then in garrisoning the Middle East (cheers). Over and above that she has furnished an enormous volume of military supplies and industrial raw material of all kinds to this country. It is perfectly true that we have undertaken the ultimate cost of that part of her effort which is not concerned with the immediate actual defence of India.

That does not, however, affect the immediate war situation, during which vast sums have been spent in India, with no sufficient outlet in the shape of consumers'

goods, whether imported or home produced, to absorb them. It was really inevitable that under these conditions prices should tend to rise. The Government of India has made great efforts within the compass of what was possible in the very difficult conditions of India to cope with this. But no degree of taxation upon a very limited tax-paying class could get away from the position that a vast sum had been spent in India to agriculturists and others and there were no consumer goods to absorb the sums. For the first two years the tendency to inflation was kept in check. It was only late in the summer of 1941 that, effected by diverse war news, the price of agricultural products began to rise really seriously. Once the prices began to rise, accompanied as that was by an increasingly general uncertainty by the actual fear of invasion, and, I must add, for several months in 1942 by the widespread and unnecessary disturbances, that the situation did deteriorate at an increasingly rapid rate. The peasant, finding that he could meet his standing obligation by the sale of less produce, and unable to buy goods which he needed, naturally in many cases tended—and who will blame him?—to keep a little more for his own undernourished family. In other cases he held back his crop to make sure that if his next crop failed he might not be forced to buy food at an exorbitant price, as many have in recent months had to do.

"I entirely agree with what Mr. Pethick Lawrence has said about that. If there had been money the problem would not be nearly as serious as it is to-day. At the same time merchants small and large, in villages, towns and cities, followed suit. The effect of all these factors, each operating on a relatively small scale upon supplies and prices in great urban and industrial centres, was of course wholly disproportionate. It was with this increasingly anxious situation that the Government of India was called upon to deal, amid many other urgent pre-occupations, during 1942. The problem has throughout been one of high prices and local shortage, both essentially due to maldistribution rather than of an absolute overall total shortage for the whole of India. The figures given in the White Paper show that the total supply of principal food grains for consumption in India during the past crop year have been nearly two million tons above the average of the two preceding years. Mr. Pethick Lawrence referred to exports. It is true that there has been a small export during the last crop year, much smaller than in the two previous years and actually the net export figure given in the White Paper is not wholly correct, because it does not include the pretty substantial imports of food grains on Government account during that period. Such export as there was, has been for regions no less distressed or in danger of distress than India itself, namely Ceylon, where conditions are very similar to India, and which suffered the loss of the Burma rice crop and coastal regions of the Persian Gulf. To the difficulties in the way of geographical distribution we have also had to induce a rice-eating population to accustom themselves to a change of diet.

CONSTITUTIONAL DIFFICULTY

"We must bear in mind the nature of the constitution which was set up by this House under the Government of India Act of 1935. It is very difficult for us, accustomed to a centralised and all powerful legislature and executive, to realise the workings of a federal constitution in which the powers of the centre and the constituent units are strictly defined and over wide areas mutually exclusive. Agriculture and food are in the provincial field, and for the Government of India to invade the field of provincial responsibility would in normal peace time have been not only unconstitutional in the sense that we use the word, but actually illegal. It is perfectly true that under Section 102 of the Act, strengthened at the outbreak of the war by a new section 126-A, power to override the provinces both in the legislative and the executive field is given to the Centre when India's security is threatened by war. But to invoke those sections in the absence of any administrative machinery or trained staff with which to enforce them, was not an easy matter. It was not want of foresight or courage, but ordinary commonsense which led the Government of India to handle the problem from the outset by a conference with the Provincial and State Governments primarily responsible for dealing with the food problem, and by persuasion rather than by coercion.

"In doing so, the Central Government naturally came up against the particular interests of different provinces. To bring up the fact that these several and divergent interests have not been altogether easy to reconcile is not an attempt to disparage Indian self-government. All self-government is, by its very nature, self-regarding. The more democratic and more efficient, the more apt it is to be zealous in the defence of its own constituents."

Mr. *Amery* continued: "I need not recapitulate the series of conferences to deal with the question of food prices which the Government of India convened from October 1939 onwards. They are fully dealt with in *Sir Azizul Haque's* very full and clear review and they show how continually alive the Government of India was from the very first to the possible dangers of the situation. Among other measures within the scope of the Central Government's powers it initiated and subsidised a 'grow-more-food' campaign early in 1942, under which some twelve million additional acres had been brought under food crops. Towards the end of 1942, the situation especially as regards wheat, but also in consequence of the loss of Burma to which certain parts of Southern India had been accustomed to look to supplement their rice supplies, looked so threateningly, not only as regards prices but as regards actual supplies in many provinces that Government convened an All-India Food Conference with Provincial and State Governments. At this, it was decided first of all to drop price control on wheat which had been found to keep wheat supplies off the market. Secondly, the Provinces all agreed to estimate their supply position and inform the Central Government of their estimated surplus or deficit. They then undertook to procure all surplus supplies and make them available for distribution by the Centre to areas which were in deficit. On this foundation the Government of India's basic plan for feeding deficit areas from surplus producing areas was drawn up."

Mr. *Cove* (Labour) intervening said: "Was this information conveyed to Government here? I am not trying to score any debating point, but I have a quotation from Mr. *Amery* in January this year in which he said there was no fear of any famine of any kind whatever, that everything was all right as far as India was concerned, and that there was no cause for great alarm of any kind. Was any information of that kind conveyed to him, and if it was what action did the Government here take?"

MENACE OF WIDESPREAD FAMINE AVERTED

Mr. *Amery* continuing said: "I was naturally in constant touch with the Government of India over the situation, and while the Government of India had its anxieties the measures it had taken were in their hope—and I may add the hope was justified in a greater part of India—sufficient to meet the needs of the situation. But if Mr. *Cove* will have patience for a few minutes more, he will find a fuller answer to the question he has asked in the statement I am going to make. What I was going to say was that these arrangements, helped as they were by the substantial emergency imports for which the Government of India in good time asked this country, and which this country supplied in spite of the shipping difficulties, and also helped a little later by a bumper wheat crop in the Punjab—aided by these windfalls the arrangements made by the Government of India, in the main achieved their immediate purpose. If we are to judge the situation as a whole and in its proper perspective, we must remember that what threatened India a year ago was a widespread, possibly almost universal famine. If members will look at the notes in section 5 of the White Paper on the position of other areas than Bengal, they will realise the extent to which that menace was averted or brought within narrow limits. For that credit is duly given in the notes to the administrative action taken by the province in particular where the danger at one time seemed the greatest, the fore-sight of *Sir Roger Lumley* in the early enforcement of rationing in Bombay City and in general the energy of his administration are deserving of recognition. In the States of Travancore and Cochin only the most drastic measures have averted what might have been a terrible calamity. Much good work has indeed been done all over India to which it would be difficult to do justice in a brief summary."

"All the same, credit should justly go to the Government of India for their part in dealing with this grave problem and for their success in steadying an anxious and precarious situation for more than three quarters of India. I should like her to pay my tribute as his partner and fellow-worker to *Lord Linlithgow* who from the first to the last in all innumerable difficult problems and anxieties created by the strain of the war proved himself, by his foresight, energy and wisdom a tower of strength (cheers). If disappointment attended the high hopes with which he set out over seven and half years ago of seeing a United India well-launched on her way to full constitutional freedom, history will assuredly not leave the blame with him."

Mr. *Seymour Cocks* (Labour) intervening: When did he visit the famine area?

Mr. *Cove* (Labour): Why did he not do what *Lord Wavell* has done?

Mr. Amery replied : "That is not an altogether reasonable question to ask. Let me now turn to the particular and distressing case of Bengal. Members who have read the White Paper will have seen that at last December's Food Conference the then Premier of Bengal, Mr. Fazlul Huq, was not prepared to join in any collective scheme, and only wished Bengal to be allowed to manage its own affairs. If it could not help others, it could at any rate manage to subsist on its own rice crop. Mr. Fazlul Huq's attitude was no doubt influenced by the fact that the main anxiety at that moment was about wheat and in a lesser degree about the effect on Southern India of the loss of rice import from Burma upon which Bengal had never depended to any serious extent.

FREE INTER-PROVINCIAL TRADE STOPPED

"Unfortunately, Mr. Fazlul Huq's optimism about the actual Bengal situation proved unfounded. Within a few weeks of that conference it became clear that the main Bengal rice crop was seriously short and presently it was realised that the total supply would be less than seven million tons, a deficit of over one million tons below the normal. This alarming revelation of an allover shortage came on top of a situation already gravely affected in several large areas of Bengal by local calamities. I need only mention the devastating cyclone in Midnapore district last year and the flood which followed a few months later. In other areas the military necessity of removing river-boats, which might have facilitated Japanese invasion, added to the difficulty of equalising the supplies. By May the situation had become so critical that the Government of India withdrew from the provinces in the eastern zone powers by which they had been able to prevent inter-provincial movement. The object was to attract to Bengal by the ordinary law of supply and demand supplies from other producing provinces. This undoubtedly afforded some immediate relief, but the rise of prices which resulted in the neighbouring provinces other than Bengal was so sharp that the provincial authorities protested strongly and vehemently in the interests of their own people and the free trade experiment had to be abandoned. I might add that subsequent reports of the very representative Food Grains Policy Committee did not indeed reject the policy of inter-provincial free trade as only calculated to raise prices.

EFFORTS TO TRANSPORT FOOD TO BENGAL

"In the last three months every effort has been made to get food through to Bengal from the rest of India. There has been no failing in the transport system, which is the responsibility of the Central Government. Deliveries has been increased from an average of 1,000 tons per day in July and August to 3,700 tons a day during September and October. In the six months since last April 3,75,000 tons of rice and other grains have been delivered to Bengal on Government account, in addition to 1,00,000 tons imported commercially in the free trade period. At the present moment a further 300,000 tons from various sources, sufficient to see Bengal through the next three months to the main rice harvest, would seem to be assured and the most acute problem now is that of distribution within Bengal to districts most seriously affected. It is largely from these districts that a great number of destitute villagers, landless labourers and professional beggars have drifted into Calcutta, often in the last stages of weakness. It is their immigration that has been mainly responsible for the heart-rending scenes of suffering which have so deeply touched and disquieted us here. The present Bengal Ministry, helped by the long experience of provincial and district administration of the acting Governor Sir Thomas Rutherford, has been doing all in their power to cope with a desperate situation both in Calcutta and the outlying districts. They are at this moment distributing food from 5,500 free kitchens subsidised or maintained by Government. In one way or another over two million persons are receiving daily free issues of food.

Every effort has been made to make price control effective, a far more difficult problem in India than here, and that is beginning to show some signs of success. A rationing scheme for Calcutta is being worked out and should be in operation in the course of the next few weeks. Meanwhile the tragic tale of loss of life has continued and is still continuing. The death rate directly or indirectly due to starvation for Calcutta alone has amounted to some 8,000 between August 15th and October 15th. There are no reliable figures available for outside districts, but I fear that in south-west and south-east Bengal figures may have been even worse than in Calcutta. Even now that sufficient total supplies seem assured, there may well be some time no diminution in the loss of life until the organisation of distribution has effectively covered all ground. In this deplorable situation Lord Wavell as the first act of his Viceroyship has intervened with striking results (hear,

hear). Lord Wavell, like another great soldier before him, came, saw for himself, and took action. Under his impulse the Bengal Government are taking steps to move all destitutes from Calcutta to relief camps where they can be fed and medically reconditioned until they are fit to return to their own homes. A senior military officer with adequate staff has been lent to the Bengal Government to supervise the movement of grains into the districts out of the Calcutta bottle-neck.

A member, intervening, asked whether that was on the initiative of the Viceroy. Mr. Amery: "I was referring to his impulse. The army which on Gen. Auchinleck's initiative has already placed considerable quantities of stores and particularly of milk products at the disposal of the civil authorities has been encouraged to use its resources up to the utmost extent to help tide over the situation until after the harvest.

"Troops are being sent to all the worst affected districts in order to help the civil authorities with transport and safe distribution of food. Additional troops are being moved into Bengal for this purpose. Field Ambulance and clearing stations and a medical staff are being made available for the establishment of a large number of small local hospitals.

FOOD IMPORTS AND SHIPPING

"What the House now will wish to know is what we, in this country, have been able to do and are doing to help. The problem here is entirely one of shipping. Wheat is available in Australia and elsewhere in quite a sufficient supply if only ships can be spared to lift it. I need not remind the House of the vast quantities of shipping required, not only to feed the munition industries and the population in this island or the great armies accumulated here, in the Mediterranean and elsewhere as well as for supplying Russia, but for every serious military operations enormous quantities of shipping have to be concentrated.

Mr. Sorensen, interposing, asked: "Are you aware that reports have appeared in the press recently of loads of foodstuffs coming from Canada and Australia? Could not such shipping be used for taking foodstuffs to India?"

Mr. Amery continuing said: "If I might just continue on this question of shipping, I would remind the House that something like 2,500 vessels were required for the Sicilian landing alone, and that was only a foretaste of the need of the larger operations still to come. I admit that our shipping resources are improving with the success of the campaign against U-boats, but our military commitment are all the time growing with our resources. We have managed to find ships to deliver a considerable tonnage of grains to India between now and the end of the year.

"The first few ships have already unloaded and arrivals will continue steadily during the next few months and for as long as may be required. But I must repeat that the task is no easy one, for every ship released for this purpose is a diversion from the war effort and we have all the time to balance against our desire to reduce the effects of the famine in India our urgent duty to finish the war as quickly as possible. It is only in that way indeed that we shall relieve the strain of war upon India which has led to the present distress and which will continue to give cause for anxiety until victory is won. Meanwhile every effort will be made to expedite the dispatch of such less bulky and strengthening foodstuffs as can be conveyed to India in one way or another. We have already some weeks ago released from this country 500 tons of dried milk for which shipping was provided. South Africa has generously offered to put at India's disposal from her own resources a considerable quantity of milk products as well as a cargo of maize. As a result of the suggestion made the other day by the Member for Streatham, Mr. Robertson, the Minister of Food has provided for India one million Halibut oil capsules containing Vitamin A—a consignment of these is already on its way by air—for use in treating starvation cases in hospital. The army in India are also releasing from their stocks a quantity of their own standard Vitamin capsules which can be replaced later. Is there then, the House might ask, no effective way whereby the generous sympathy of our public can be shown for those who are victims of this tragic catastrophe? Certainly.

APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

"Over and above the direct provision of food by the Government there is a great amount of valuable work in helping to organise distribution in looking after women and children in providing clothes and other aftercare and later on the looking after the orphans for which private generosity has been enlisted in India and of which private generosity in this country can and I trust will contribute, Lord

Wavell has already set up a Central Relief Fund from which to supplement the various local relief funds in Bengal and elsewhere and the High Commissioner for India here in conjunction with the Lord Mayor and myself, has appealed for contributions to Lord Wavell's fund to be sent to him at the India House. Other funds have, I know, also been initiated for the same general good purpose. I have no doubt our public will not be behindhand in showing through one channel or another their practical sympathy for the distressed in India. They will not have forgotten the generous spirit in which the Indians showed their practical sympathy for those who suffered here from the enemy's air attacks two years ago. I might add that Ceylon, among the many parts of the Empire anxious to help, has already made a contribution of Rs. 2,50,000 to Lord Wavell's fund.

So much for the immediate situation. Much remains to be done before the anxiety as to the general food situation in India can be regarded as in any way diminished. The Government of India at the All-India Food Conference early last month decided to tighten up and strengthen their whole basic plan for the procurement and distribution of foodstuffs. They are working towards the ultimate establishment of an effective statutory price control on a regional basis. They have decided on the introduction by Provincial Governments at the earliest possible moment of rationing in all towns with a population of over a hundred thousand. In the event of any failure or delay in the execution of these measures they have made it clear that they will not hesitate to use to the full their war emergency powers. Meanwhile the provinces are everywhere improving the organisation. Some form of price control is now in force in almost every province. Urban rationing is being actively taken in hand. What is not less important is that public opinion in India is becoming more and more alive to the necessity of measures required by the situation. The Government of India are engaged actively in considering how to combat inflation which has so largely contributed to the present crisis by more vigorous efforts to get consumer goods on the market at reasonable prices and by the ordinary financial expedient of loan and taxation policy. For the last six months the general price level has been stabilised. We can, I think, feel reasonable confidence that in this and other ways the Governments in India—the Central and the Provincial Governments—will by their co-operation enable India's economic life to stand up to the strain which war has imposed upon it without a recurrence of such calamity as that which we are witnessing in Bengal.

"WILL NOT IMPAIR OUR PLEDGES TO INDIA"

The House will have realised from the account I have given and from the account given by Mr. Pethick Lawrence the nature of some of the problems which confront India not only in war but also in peace. These problems will continue to confront India whatever the future form of her Government. The realisation of that cannot affect in any way the desire of this House or the people of this country to see India advance as rapidly as possible to the full control of her own destinies as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth and an equal member of a society of free nations. Nor can it in any way impair the pledges we have given. But it does emphasise one aspect of these pledges, namely, the immense importance to India's future of a system of Government based on agreement and co-operation between all its parts and elements. Only on that foundation can India live secure from external danger and from internal economic breakdown and attain to the greatness and prosperity to which her natural resources and the gifts of her people justly entitle her (cheers).

Mr. Hore-Belisha and Mr. Wardlaw-Milne both expressed disappointment about shipping and urged the Government to release more ships.

Perhaps the most stringent criticism came from Sir George Schuster (Liberal National) who was a member of the Viceroy's Council in India from 1928-1934. The Government of India, he said, should have had an All-India plan. He agreed that the main task and executive action must be left to the Government on the spot but on almost every question of major policy, the India Office with their continuity of experience should be able to give wise advice and guidance to the Government of India. The responsibility which rested on London had not been fully discharged.

Sir John Anderson, replying to the debate, said: "I have followed the course of this debate with deep interest and I confess with somewhat mixed feelings. I was in Bengal in intimate touch with the affairs of that province for six years and despite difficulties and anxieties by which I was beset from time to time during those years, I can truthfully say they were among the happiest years of my life

and certainly the most interesting. The country and the people of India take a grip of one. That is a universal experience of those who have lived and worked in India. And among Members of this House, there are many who have had that experience. We never seem to lose interest in what is happening in that great country. And I certainly tell the House that I heard of the misfortune and disasters in India with a great sense of personal affliction.

"I have found the course of this debate somewhat painful. Some of the speeches, particularly that of Sir *George Schuster*, seemed to be designed to give impressions of mistakes, muddles and incompetence all-round. Well, in this business it is no use talking about where moral responsibility rests. What we have to consider is where that responsibility in fact rests. It is no use talking as if the grant of Responsible Self-Government made no difference. To say that, is to deny Self-Government. Where the penalty of failure has to be paid in human lives, in suffering and in death, we should surely all beware how we apportion blame and indeed it is not in my judgment always right, when human affairs miscarry, to conclude at once that someone must have been at fault. Misfortunes fall often in the course of human affairs in ways that are quite incalculable, and indeed natural calamity has played its part, and no inconsiderable part, in the present situation.

"First, I think it is of great importance to avoid the fallacy of judging Indian affairs by standards that are applied here. The situation is indeed vastly different. We are a highly organised community, rich, compact with a great store of experience and great resources in organisation and technical knowledge and possessing an administrative machinery of remarkable flexibility and power and with it all, there is a great fund of goodwill which comes into prominence at every time of trial. That is vastly important. Turn to India. What a contrast : there can be no real comparison. India is a poor country, mainly of small agriculturists spread over a vast area with a very primitive social and economic structure. To say it is primitive is not to condemn it. There is no unitary system of government. The responsibility is divided by the Constitution itself between the Centre and the Provinces. Primary responsibility for all services touching the life of the people rests with the provincial Governments. This division of responsibility is reflected in the organisation of public services in India. There are no highly organised Departments of Provincial Governments as we know them here. The system I have been describing is admirably suited to the traditional task of Government in India but it is subject to distinct limitations when it comes to carrying out of a central policy in a new field. In the speeches heard to-day the Government of India have been very severely criticised on hollow grounds—first as regards the financial policy and then their omission or failure to override the provincial authorities.

GOVT. SLOW IN FIGHTING INFLATION

"I think when it is realised to what extent the Government of India are inevitably dependent on Provincial Governments for their sources of information and technical advice, because it is the Provincial authorities only that are in touch with local conditions which vary from place to place as they do in the continent of Europe, it will be recognised and generally accepted that the Government of India were very wise to endeavour to proceed in consultation with Provincial Governments to try to carry those Governments with them. When some honourable members say the Government of India ought to have taken action very much earlier, they attribute to the Government of India primary responsibility in such a matter as this which does not really constitutionally or properly belong to that Government. This complaint that the Government of India might have acted much earlier relates to a time when people were not dying. I am bound to say, however, I do think that in regard to inflation it is unfortunate there was not more prompt realisation of what was happening and more vigorous action in a matter definitely within the sphere of the Government of India. I am not here to whitewash the authorities which may have been backward or in any way failed in the discharges of their responsibility. I do recognise that it is very easy to be wise after the event. We here had the advantage of being able to profit by the experience of the last war, whereas the Government of India are in a rather different situation. Although I do not entirely agree with Mr. *Pethick Lawrence* in treating inflation as the main cause of what has happened, I think inflatory spirals prices did contribute very largely to a hold-up in the supplies of grain, particularly rice, which I regard as one of the main causes of the unfortunate situation which had come about.

"Remedies for the situation are in principle fairly obvious. The trouble in India arises from an enormous expenditure of goods and services by our own Government, military authorities and American authorities on the one hand and a

serious curtailment in the supply of the consumer goods on the other. There is a very serious disequilibrium there. Apart from that there is a great need for action which will divert as much as possible of surplus purchasing power either by adjustment of taxation or a more vigorous savings campaign. These are the directions in which action is certainly required and I am glad to note that the Government of India are handling this matter now with great vigour and determination.

"Sir John Anderson said he did not wholly agree with the view suggested that the situation which had developed in Bengal in course of this year might have been foreseen much earlier. "To all appearances as far as Bengal is concerned up to the end of the last year there was no particular cause for worry. The rice harvest in 1941-42 was exceptionally good—it was definitely in excess of local requirements at the end of 1942. The then Chief Minister of Bengal, Mr. Fazul Huq expressed the opinion at a conference in Delhi that if Bengal was left to itself it could win through. That was the responsible opinion by a Minister who had exceptional knowledge of the people of this Province. I hold no brief for Mr. Fazul Huq who was my Chief Minister upon the inception of the present reform until I left India in 1937 and during all that time our relations were not marred by any single disagreement.

"Nevertheless, I hold no brief for him. He is very well able to speak for himself but I say that the responsible opinion which he expressed was the opinion to which the Government of India rightly paid attention. They would have been open to a very serious reproach had they not done so. I am not so sure myself that Mr. Fazul Huq could not put a pretty good defence for the view he then took. In the previous year, the rice harvest had been particularly good. In the year 1942 the prospects of the main paddy crop were "normal until fairly late in the year when a considerable part of western Bengal was stricken by a cyclone and devastated by the result of floods. That had a serious effect upon the harvest, but nevertheless, I can well believe there may have been good ground for supposing that the return of the harvest would be normal until it became apparent that there had been superimposed upon the effects of the flood a very serious insect blight. Apart from these two causes the harvest might have been normal and we might have heard nothing at all of the famine in Bengal."

After stating that accurate assessment of the food position in an Indian Province was a matter of extreme difficulty, Sir John Anderson said: "You have 40 million people in Bengal living directly on the produce of small holdings of an average expanse of $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. You have 20 million who are dependent on aggregate surpluses that can be gathered together from all these small holders. It is very easy to make miscalculations and it might well be that those concerned in the matter in the Provinces took the view that to talk about a prospective shortage might be the surest way of bringing such shortage about. It may be there are traders in Bengal who have secured stocks from cultivators and are holding up stocks and I agree that the most drastic action should be taken against any such attempt.

"But there has been also on the part of the cultivators a very natural tendency—and this is not blaming anybody—to hold the grain back partly to safeguard their own position and partly to attract better prices.

Mr. Sorensen (Labour): Will Sir John Anderson make it clear that the alleged hoarding is divided into these categories and that a far greater part of the hoarding is due to prudent reasons for keeping back stocks?

Sir John Anderson: That is my profound belief and I am not blaming anybody. One has to be very careful in designs to extract grain from a reluctant cultivator because the action may be too rigorous and stocks not sufficient to carry them through. If any words of mine can reach the cultivator in Bengal I would say he would be very well advised to release now everything he can above the reasonable requirement for his family. Such action would be in the interest of the province, it would be in the interest of the Government of India, it would tend to bring victory nearer and I believe it would be in the interest of the cultivators themselves because in the view of the action which the Government of India are taking I sincerely believe we have reached the peak of the inflationary processes which have been going on and that prices will tend in future to decline. Bengal, unlike most other provinces in India, is what is called a permanently settled province. It is extremely important because it means that you have not got in Bengal a vast army of minor officials living on land in villages and in close contact with individual cultivators which you find in every province where there is temporary

settlement. When it becomes the question of attempting to improve the method of procurement of supplies and machinery of distribution the lack of a body of officials who really know local circumstances and have the confidence of cultivators is a very serious defect.

I am glad to think that *Lord Wavell* is doing his best to remedy that position by enlisting the help of the army, but even so he is not likely to be able to reproduce the position which attains in temporary settled province. It is only fair to my own province and to those who are responsible for the administration there and to the admirable body of officials who are carrying an immense burden of care and anxiety that this should be made clear.

BRITISH GOVT'S POSITION

Turning to the position of His Majesty's Government, Sir John Anderson assured the House that he would never be a party to any decision which betrayed "callous disregard" and he would like to give the House, in order to show the attitude His Majesty's Government had taken up in regard to this very important question of imports of additional supplies of food, into India, information which he thought had not previously been disclosed. In the course of 1942, when the wheat situation—not the rice situation—seemed likely to cause anxiety the Government of India made an urgent appeal for help in procuring additional supplies of wheat to compensate for foodstuffs which the Government of India were having to export in the interest of the common effort to Persian Gulf and Ceylon, and may I say incidentally state that is the limit of export that has been allowed during these difficult times. To make good the deficiencies resulting from that export and to build up resources of food for the Indian army which were thought to be running down, this urgent appeal was made. It was made at a time when our shipping situation had just been brought under review by the War Cabinet and when the decision had just been taken most reluctantly to divert certain ships earmarked for military purposes in order that they might be put on the North Atlantic route to improve our food and supply position at home which was in that moment running down rather anxiously. That was the situation when that urgent appeal was received.

"The appeal of the Government of India was considered, in relation to claims on shipping. Despite the fact that ships earmarked for military purposes had been diverted as a matter of great urgency and at considerable cost in regard to future military operations in order to meet our situation at home, it was decided that a sufficient number of those very ships should be again diverted to meet the requirements of the Government of India. And that was done and food was loaded. I can tell the House this now because it relates to the past. I cannot give the same precise detail of information about current transactions. That was how that matter was dealt with. Food was loaded and dispatched to India. It was not in fact all delivered, because before the last delivery was made, further information from the Government of India showed that the harvest of wheat in Upper India in Spring this year was going to be extremely good as it was and one or two of those ships were in fact again diverted to East Africa where a difficult situation had arisen owing to the large number of prisoners of war and Polish refugees who were in that territory.

"In the course of this year further urgent appeals were received from the Government of India on the ground that a very serious situation was developing in Bengal. Those appeals were considered on their merits and decisions were taken. Action was taken as a result of which supplies of grain are now flowing freely into Bengal. Its process will go on up to the end of this year. I am not going to give the quantities. We are doing everything that is practicable having regard to distribution of war shipping to put into India up to the end of the year the maximum amount of additional grain that can be imported. By the end of the year we shall know precisely how the main paddy harvest for this winter is likely to turn out. If that paddy harvest is, as it promises to be, very good—and a very good harvest in Bengal means a harvest of ten million tons of paddy against the estimated normal consumption of eight million tons—we shall be very near the end of our troubles. At any rate by the end of the year we shall be able to review the whole situation and such further action as may appear necessary will have to be taken on a review of all demands upon shipping and upon available supplies of foodstuffs. I think I have said enough to show that there is on the part of His Majesty's Government a very full realisation of the situation in India. There has been no tendency to shirk responsibility. Of necessity in view of the constitutional position, responsibility must be divided between His Majesty's Government, the

Central Government of India and the Provincial Governments. We shall continue to watch the situation with keen interest and, I assure the House, with readiness to do everything possible to meet the needs of the situation as they may be disclosed towards the end of this year.

MR AMERY REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

The suggestion that modern milling technique should be introduced into India with a view to mitigating any further rice shortage was made by Mr. *E. Smith* (Labour) in the Commons to-day. He said the new British method not only preserved the vital germ of the grain but resulted in larger product. The method had already been taken up in the United States and was about to be started in Britain.

Mr. *Amery* said, he had heard of the process. There were certain drawbacks to its application even to the 27 per cent of Indian rice that was not hand-pounded, but he would consider communicating any information Mr. *Smith* had on the subject to the Government of India.

Replying to another question, Mr. *Amery* said, imports to India of food grains on private account during the three months April to June 1943 were negligible.

Miss *Rathbone* (Independent) asked : "In view of the rather startling fact that during the fiscal year 1942-43 exports of food grains exceeded imports by no less than 361,000 tons, can we be assured that the balance has now been redressed and that imports are exceeding exports?"

Mr. *Amery* : Yes certainly, those figures of imports do not include imports on Government account. Otherwise the figures would look more closely balanced.

When Miss *Rathbone* asked whether export of food other than grain from India was continuing to any considerable extent, Mr. *Amery* said the recommendations of that Food Grains Committee were that no export of food should be permitted unless such exports were fully compensated by imports. He had not seen the actual orders passed by the Government of India on this point but they could be relied upon to safeguard the food supplies required for Indian consumption. Mr. *Amery* said, he would look into the question of stopping the sending of individual food parcels from India.

Sir *Stanley Reed* (Conservative) asked Mr. *Amery* whether he would advise the Government of India not to hesitate to draw freely on the Indian Peoples' Famine Trust set up in 1900 for relief of distress, although it was not money famine but food famine at the present time.

Mr. *Amery* said he was sure the India Government would consider it.

Mr. *Hore Belisha* (Independent) who followed Mr. *Amery* said it was fitting that the House of Commons should be profoundly disturbed by these occurrences.

"The initial act of Lord *Wavell*, characteristic of the man, inaugurates a great Viceroyalty which will be animated by human understanding. From time immemorial, famine has been the recurrent lot of the people of the East. Mr. *Amery* has referred to the increase in the Indian population which has multiplied two and a half times in the last hundred years and is increasing at the rate of five million yearly and is in fact the quickest growth of population that has ever been recorded. This increase has taken place in a country in which the greater part of the population draws its living from the soil. But the conditions of agriculture are primitive. When Mr. *Amery* was describing them, somebody in the Labour benches interrupted to say why have we not improved them, but, you are dealing here with a country in which handloom is held up as a national idol.

Cries of 'By whom'.

Mr. *Hore Belisha* : By Mr. *Gandhi*.

Cries of "not by the Indian people."

Mr. *Hore Belisha*, continuing said, "There are in fact twelve million wooden ploughs in the country and the harvest is reaped with sickle. The grain is separated by oxen, trodden down or beaten out by hand and wind is the winnowing fan."

Mr. *Silverman* (Labour) : Is Mr. *Hore Belisha* seriously suggesting that mechanical industrialisation of India, if it ever comes, would be accompanied by a fall in the population? The industrialisation of Britain led to a rapid increase in population and so it has been everywhere.

Mr. *Hore Belisha* : I was not dealing with that aspect of the matter at all. If we wish the world to understand the situation we ought to do ourselves the justice of explaining it to the world. These conditions reflect themselves in fertility figures. The yield of rice per acre in India is 731 lbs, in Japan it is 2307 lbs, in Egypt it is 2879 lbs. The yield of wheat per hectare is seven quintals in India and 21 in Great Britain. It is a primitive instinct to withhold your goods if you cannot get

silver or gold or the results of the use of silver or gold. I am not suggesting that everything possible has been done to ameliorate the situation, but the facts explain it. When you add the impact of war to a nervous people, influx of refugees, and, if you wish, inflation and a general disorganisation of conducting military operations, you have more than enough to explain these matters. What should be realised is that before the war, we had mitigated, if not eliminated, famine from India.

URGENCY OF SHIPPING NOT FULLY APPRECIATED

After quoting figures showing the numbers of dams built to save monsoon rains and river improvements to prevent flooding, etc., Mr. *Hore Belisha* added: "These are the achievements of British rule which must be borne in mind. Under the category of bringing relief in time of famine, it is obvious that means of communications are required. Forty thousand miles of railway have been built in India. There are new roads and shipping was always available in times of peace without difficulty. But none of these means can be used freely in time of war. The Railways must be used primarily for military purpose and shipping cannot be available to the same extent. I do not accept that it is impossible to do more in respect of shipping and I am going to urge Mr. *Amery* to regard this need as having certain priority because these people are starving.

Measures intended to produce victory which will bring relief to us all, in some respects, must come first, but I do not feel satisfied that the urgency of shipping is sufficiently appreciated. We do, however, appreciate that shipping has to pass through waters wherein Japanese submarines are lurking and we do recognise that the Japanese are in occupation of the Andaman Islands. But it would transfer into action the wishes of the House if Mr. *Amery* were sustained in his demand to the War Cabinet for more shipping.

WARTIME ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA

Dealing with administration in India in wartime, Mr. *Hore Belisha* said that Mr. *Amery* had remarked that organisation had not been completely established. "We understand the difficulties," said Mr. *Hore Belisha*. We know that when you consider rationing in India and other modern methods of dealing with war-time conditions and base our demand upon what exists in Britain, you are making a false and indeed impossible comparison.

"There are only about 1,200 members of the Indian Civil Service of whom about half are British. That is not a very big staff on which to rely. If further officials could be sent out to India by aeroplane to assist in this organisation I think it should be done. The Hot Springs Food Conference pointed out in very vivid language what the food situation of the world in fact is. They said there had never been enough food in the world to supply all the people and there is going to be very serious shortage after the war and that effects of this shortage can only be abolished by concerted action among the Nations. Put in against the background of the world as a whole the Bengal situation is only an indication of what will happen elsewhere. But India is in a better position than almost any other country in the long-term view.

"How has the war affected India as a whole? How have we put into operation this economic imperialist exploitation of India of which complaint has been made by the Labour benches? India has completed transition from a debtor to a creditor country. Before the war India owed us 360 million pounds. That has been entirely wiped out and we now owe India, who has accumulated sterling balances, to an even greater amount."

Mr. *Molson* (Conservative): "Total is 85 millions."

"I submit to Government that this disaster which is so universally deplored and the effects of which we determine by every resolution to remedy, is also like many other disasters an opportunity. The war will compel us to reconstruct our international life in many particulars. Have we not here a chance to look again at this Indian problem and remove the real defects which the disaster discloses, namely, defects of provincial administration, because the more power is handed over to the provinces inspired by this spirit the more will be the dangers for India in the future? If Sir *Stafford Cripps* had come back from Delhi as the Foreign Secretary will come back from Moscow with complete triumph and if it were possible to imagine that British influence and authority had been excluded to an even greater extent than it now is, would this situation have been better or worse? There is no doubt about the answer. We are not going back upon the course upon which we have embarked, but it is in the interests both of India and ourselves that we should look at the whole matter and not at one small aspect in the light of

these experiences in order that we may in the British Empire be given one more evidence of our capacity to organize in a manner which promotes the greatest good of a great number of the mankind."

Sir John Wardlaw Milne (Conservative) said the House would feel disappointed that Mr. Amery was not able to give a more definite statement regarding shipping which would be available for famine relief (cheers). He pressed for immediate action. Regarding hoarding, he said there had been some very unpleasant rumours about those responsible for the real hoarding in Bengal and hoped that inquiry would reach those who had taken part whether they were people of position or even members of the Administration themselves (hear, hear).

Referring to the enormous increase in the Indian population, *Sir John Wardlaw Milne* said: "Looking back over the last 30 or 40 years, one cannot honestly say that the intelligentsia of India have ever taken this problem up sufficiently and impressed upon their own people the dangers of the present situation (hear, hear). While I pay tribute to the few who have, I am bound to say that this problem, which can only be dealt with by Indians themselves, has never been fully tackled". On the question of responsibility, he said the Government of India were in this extraordinary position—if they let the people starve they were inhuman, but if they forced any action, they were interfering with the Indian Government. If the Act of 1935 had been put into full operation and there had been a strong Federal Government, things might have been very different. Meanwhile, he said, "It must be made clear to the Central Government, which is to exist until the new constitution arises, that it must be able to take power and act for the whole of India. This famine has shown that nothing but a Central Government for the whole of India will do and we must have one whether it be composed as now of a large majority of Indian members or of all Britishers—you must have a strong Central Government". He was tired of the constant blame on the British people for this famine. "We are blamed when the blame really rests upon Bengal primarily and on the Central Government secondarily.....I have seen the Bengal Famine put forward as a ghastly example of British inefficiency and misrule. It is nothing of the kind. If anything, it is extremely damaging to the Indian case. But I prefer to look at it as one of those mistakes that are bound to happen when power is thrust into the hands of people. They are apt to go far and think some blame attaches to the Central Government". *Sir John Wardlaw Milne* added: "We are constantly said to be inducing India to come into the British Empire. Membership of the British Empire, I hope, is not for sale. We are not in a position wherein we have to beg people to enter the British Empire. India's membership of the British Empire would be a great asset to the Empire, but it would be a far greater asset to India and I wonder indeed how she would ever exist without it. I object to this constant misrepresentation."

Mr. Graham White said the debate was very much overdue and there ought to be far more discussion of Indian affairs. He did not think Mr. Pethick Lawrence was well advised in suggesting that there should be an inquiry and allocation of responsibility. "You cannot feed a starving people on criticisms nor feed a starving people of Bengal on scapegoats." He thought the action taken on the formation of the Food Grains Advisory Committee might well have been taken earlier. "I am the last to urge that this central authority should interfere in the arrangements of the Provincial Governments, but it became obvious, at last by this time last year, that the situation could promise nothing but famine."

Mr. Graham White wanted to be sure that everything was being done in a short-term policy to bring an end to the famine and oust this calamity to make an opportunity to start on a long-term policy—which perhaps might only come to fruition in 25 years—to make it economically possible for the people of India to live at least on a standard of life appropriate to an eastern country." The debate afforded an opportunity to show how deeply Britain felt for fellow citizens in India. British opinion and sympathy had been profoundly stirred by these events. "They have been allowed to arise." *Mr. Graham White* mentioned that a friend of his had read 400 letters accompanying gifts for India. Among them no less than eight were from old-age pensioners who had contributed something like a week's pension. It was a touching evidence of the way people in this country responded to the needs of the Indian situation.

Sir Alfred Knox said he was convinced that the cause of the present position in India was economic nationalism—the jealousy and determination of the different provinces of India to save their own people, to keep their reserves of grain and not let them to provinces which had deficits. Surely it was the duty of the

Government of India to override that and force Governments which had excesses to give up their grains to others. The Food Department should have been set up a year or two earlier. He asked if they had power under the Government of India Act to force the Government of Bengal to take steps for the safety, livelihood and lives of the people. Had the Bengal Government taken sufficiently strict measures against hoarders? Had any punishment been given to the occupiers of the three shops in Calcutta which had 5000 lbs. of grain and rice while men were dying at their doors? We are going to have one of the greatest tragedies of the world in India unless some method can be inculcated—perhaps the Government can take a lead by which the people of India may get some realisation of the necessity of, in some way, limiting the population before a disaster occurs.

Mr. *Ridley* (Labour) said in this grave tragedy the air is thick with chickens coming home to roost." There was a complete absence of any ability to comprehend the consequences of the situation and to deal with them. The powers now being used could have been used with greater effect months ago. Price-fixing and rationing have saved this country. In India, it seems the situation was allowed to go from bad to very desperate, and until that stage was reached, nothing substantial was attempted. References in the White Paper to what was said to have happened in Bengal were on the face of it disturbing, but he preferred to take the view that there might be more than one interpretation of what had been said of Bengal. Because of a general failure to be resolute, the death rate had risen to figures that even now defied understanding. He doubted whether Britain had here any more than a modest conception of the state of Bengal, of any understanding of the reasons why so many human beings died just of sheer physical starvation. As to remedial measures, he asked whether the Central Government had accepted all recommendations of the Food Grains Policy Committee, including the appointment of a rice expert for the duration of the war and raising the import level. Would it be possible and would Mr. *Amery* strive to make it possible to create a Central Food Grains Reserve which the Committee recommended? Would shipping be available and what were the prospects of increasing the available shipping? Lord *Wavell*, he said, had shown capacity for sympathetic understanding and a desire to help without the accompaniment of pomp and circumstance. The inescapable and uncomfortable fact remained that they were dealing with a normally heavily undernourished people. The mass of the people had been living at an economic and nutritional level to which human beings should never be subject. It was an astonishing fact that despite greatly increased knowledge of scientific methods of agriculture, the total agricultural production in India had remained static.

Mr. *Cove* (Labour) also asked for fuller information and full inquiry. "The responsibility must be fixed and fixed quickly," he said. The inquiry might be by a select committee of the House or a Royal Commission, but it was quite clear from the tone of Mr. *Amery's* speech that the House needed further information. "The war has provided an acid test of our rule in India. We have been there for 200 years and when a war of this character breaks out our machinery in India, so far as morale etc., is concerned, has broken down. We have lamentably failed. It is quite impossible to meet the situation unless we, at the same time, try to remedy the political difficulties in India. Our friends like *Pandit Nehru* and others are in gaol. We may as well be frank—there is no co-operation from the Indian side among leaders there for our cause and I believe that is due to our fault. Not only have we to get food ships to India, but we have to release leaders of the Indian Congress from gaol. "We should seize the great opportunity of solving the political problems that confronted us in India." Mr. *Cove* asked why the same powerful direct drastic action taken against the Congress leaders had not been applied to feeding the Indian people. What action had been taken in this total war to see that the morale of the Indian people was maintained? "It is all the more an indictment against the Government and Mr. *Amery* that India is always on a low level and had no surpluses to speak of. That fact itself ought to have made the Government aware of the situation that might arise. What is the Government's answer to that? Look at the Inertness, stupidity and lack of humanity of the Secretary of State for India in reply to questions in this House". Mr. *Cove* quoted sentences which, he said, were reported as having been uttered by Mr. *Amery* in January such as "no cause for alarm. With care and proper distribution, there should be enough—to go round— But the distribution problem is undoubtedly difficult."

The Convocation Addresses

S. N. D. Indian Women's University Convocation

In the course of the Convocation Address at the Shreemati Nathibhai Damodher Thackersey Indian Women's University at Bombay, delivered on 8rd July 1943, Dr. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Kt., K.C.I.E., B.A., LL.D. said :—I have dwelt at this length on this element of weakness inherent in our constitution, to emphasise perhaps the most noticeable defect we have to remedy as effectively and quickly as possible. But before coming to that, I should like to claim all the credit we reasonably can for our peculiarity that has distinguished our University from the start. We have insisted from the first on using the mother-tongue as the medium for all our subjects for all our teaching and examinations at all stages. We trust that this departure brings the student closer to the subjects she takes up, enables her very soon to think for herself, supplement the material her text-books and her teachers place before her own independent observations and investigations, and eliminates from her work all mere cramming and learning by rote. Instead of being a merely passive receptacle for information sedulously poured into her, she begins to offer intelligent and active co-operation from a very early stage, and is thus in reality educating herself as much as she is being instructed and educated from above. Under these circumstances the development of her faculties becomes much more natural and rapid, and keenness is aroused in the subjects she is pursuing, not merely for passing her tests, but for her own sake. This is the theory of the advocates of the mother-tongue as the natural medium of thought, study, investigation and expression. This is the ideal. We have pursued it now for generation, to a much greater extent than any other University in the land. Are we actually succeeding in this? Do our students get into closer and more living contact with, do they feel a keener and more abiding interest in their subjects, than do students of the same calibre in other Universities who still cling to English as the principal medium? We hope so; but the results we have so far attained are far from decisive on this point. Perhaps, the experiment has to go on resolutely for a much longer period. Perhaps there may be some great defect in our endeavour, some deficiency we have to make good before we can expect to reap the full harvest of our better system. This requires to be proved very carefully and dispassionately by all advocates of higher education on our lines.

And another thing. While insisting on the fundamental value of the mother-tongue for higher education, we have laid equal emphasis on our extensive and adequate familiarity with English Language and literature, the secular Bible of freedom, modern humanism and individual self-realization. Nor has English history and literature only this high spiritual value to recommend it. From a practical and material standpoint also, the English language is the universal medium of global inter-communication. My own venerable professor at the Elphinstone College, in the eighties, Dr. W. Wordsworth, as good a liberal and as sympathetic a friend of India as England ever sent out to this land on her civilising mission, may be cited in support of my first point. "Deliberately and without craven fear (he said at the University of Bombay on a memorable occasion), we have invited the Youth of India to study our history and our literature, and have permeated them with our ideas Can we imagine that it is now possible to retain a people thus aroused, stimulated and enlightened, in the leading strings appropriate to a time which has for ever passed away?" And who can deny that the study of English history and literature has created and stimulated the great urge for the freedom and independence of our mother-land?

Sir. S. Radhakrishnan's observations to us at our Jubilee celebrations (1941) support my second contention as to the outstanding value of the English language for Modern India, on the eve of this New Age of a greater mutual intercourse between all the nations all over the world than at any time in the past. Sir. S. Radhakrishnan stands, if I may say so, next only to Mr. Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore, and Shrimati Sarojini Naidu in winning genuine homage from the self-complacent West, for our Indian Culture and our innumerable spiritual heritage. Both travel and contact with many minds have also widened his outlook. Agreeing that fundamental importance he assigned to the Mother-Tongue in higher education, he nevertheless adds,—“Let me also tell you that this is not enough. It should

not be at the peril of our learning the English Language. Let us understand that our national ideals, our cultural fellowships and international contacts, are all through the medium of the English language. And in a world which is growing increasingly interdependent it is not wise for India to cut adrift, and therefore there must be sufficient emphasis on the English language as well."

If you need a third argument to stress the vital importance to Modern India of English language and literature, which the fanatical advocates of an extreme (and I may even say without exaggeration) a suicidal nationalism are so busy belittling—I may point to our modern vernacular literatures in the decades of their marvellous vitality and manysided advance in recent times. It began with *Raja Ram Mohan Roy*, *Michael Madhu Sudan Dutta* and *Bankim Chandra* in Bengali, with the Kayastha Munshis and the Munshi Moulvis in Urdu; the Brahman and Jain Pandits in Hindi. Look at all the others, Gujarati, Marathi, Canarese, Telugu, Tamil from the Pamirs in the North to Cape Comorin in the far south. I do not wish to flood my address with lists of names. Take the modern Indian language, you know best; by preference, your own mother-tongue. Make lists of the best known and most influential modern writers in it. For Gujarati shall we say Narmada Shankar, Ramanbhai, Manilal, Goverdhanram, Narsingrao, Gandhi, Kishorelal Masruvala, Kalapi, Munshi, Balvantrai Thakore, Ramanlal Desai? Add only three out of the younger men, Dhumaketu, Jhaverchand Meghani, Gunvantrai. Those who are exclusively or mainly poets I have excluded; for they appeal to a smaller if more select audience, and their general influence in contemporary life and thought is comparatively less. Now look at the work of these leaders of our literary renaissance in the mass. Is it not saturated through and through with the spirit of English literature? We admire their penetrating descriptions of Indian life and local scenery. We marvel at the realization of each individuality but who can miss the fact that the spirit of the best is English literature? Boycott English language and literature from our education, exclude this vital element, concentrate on Swadeshi nationalism in our schools and colleges and where would this new life and vigour, this welcome growth and rich modernity and warm humanity of our own mother literatures be? They have only had a few short decades so far to develop in. Cut off from their English sources will they not shrink to nothing in a few more decades? Even nationalism ceases to spiritual good, if fanatically exaggerated into provincialism, communalism and sectarianism.

Thus, I cannot but endorse my friend Sir R. P. *Paranjpye's* definition of the aim and object of our University to make our students "*bilingual*," equally proficient in the Mother-Tongue and in the English Language. It is indeed as noble spiritually as it is worthy from the practical and material point of view. And I revert to the question I suggested a little earlier. Are we succeeding in our ideal? If not yet, it is merely because we have not yet pursued it long enough, or what is it that stands in the way of our realization? Is it the want of suitable text-books, or proper methods of teaching, or most fundamental of all, a more highly qualified staff of lecturers and professors? I call the last the most fundamental because with a qualified staff, suitable text-books and proper methods would follow as a matter of course. Now, I have no desire to dogmatise. And I have nothing but praise for our staff as a whole. The best of them can stand comparison with the best lecturers and professors in the other Universities. But I believe we must face the fact in all candour that the culture of our students cannot reach higher levels unless we have a more numerous and a better qualified staff. Nor is this merely a question of funds, salaries and prospects, although a minimum living wage is of course the *sine qua non*. What I am anxious to communicate to you is my fear that we are not providing this minimum living wage to attract to our University an adequate number of scholars with a lifelong devotion to their chosen field of intellectual activity and research. Only such professors have the rare gift of educating all the keenness of fresh young minds and inspiring them with something of their own love of learning and their own austere reliance upon only the most scientific methods of research. To avoid misunderstanding, let me add, I do not know your institutions intimately enough to be sure about my diagnosis. But I may say universally that no educational institution was ever injured by a strengthening of its staff to the limit of its resources.

I have time for only one more question. In most Universities young men and young women study together. Our University is exclusively for young women. Nor do we specialise very much on subjects which might be looked upon in a special sense as pertaining to the women's sphere in life. We insist upon the same high general education for our students as for their male contemporaries. The

subjects which might be considered the special province of the sex occupy but a secondary place in our courses also. Why is this? How can this be justified or defended? I can quite understand warm advocates of female education to prefer co-education. They feel that as economic and other stresses force the male portion of the people into special grooves and particular intellectual discipline, the hiatus between the two sexes grows, and happy marriages and harmonious domestic living are endangered until the girls also are as they grow up emancipated from their traditional mentality and outlook and modernised to yoke harmoniously with their male contemporaries to the waggon of life. But it seems to me that many parents in our society, while admitting the general force of this view, instinctively feel that co-education is hardly the right solution. They are afraid lest co-education might make the young girls a greater misfit for such future as they have to make the best of. Both views have equal support from different groups of people and we must leave it with the commonplace but practical remark that it is not very difficult for people on such a point of practical psychology to agree to differ. Where reason is not quite able to perform its function as a guide, it is only natural that many of us should fall back upon instincts and traditions.

The Madras University Convocation

"A University is an organ of national life and culture and not its adverse critic. In other countries it fulfils its higher purpose by entering, as it were, into the heart and soul of the nation. It cannot afford to do otherwise in India," declared *Dewan Bahadur P. Venkataramana Rao Naidu*, Chief Justice, Mysore High Court, delivering the Convocation Address of the Madras University on the 26th. August 1943.

At the outset Mr. *Venkataramana Rao* referred to the new world order that will emerge out of the present war and said: "With insight and imagination and the illumination of faith, one can perceive, that in the midst of the negations and contradictions of war and through the travail of suffering, we are reaching forth and grasping the great truth, viz., the world idea." Stating that "in commerce, finance, communications, science and culture we have transcended the bounds of nationality; in politics alone we remain bound to nationality, putting forth resistance to the march of events," he urged that this resistance must be overcome either by the higher methods of international law and agreement, if possible, or by the lower methods of conflict and war, if necessary. But overcome it must be. "To you, the children of the university filled with ardent zeal and hope, the call comes that you should build on the corner stone of world society, so that in future, community and nation may not frustrate and nullify the achievement and realisation of world-wide human solidarity. Though in India at present you have to lead your lives under limitations both political and economic, the fact cannot be gainsaid that there has been such a widening of political and economic life through inter-national contacts that sooner or later the limitations are bound to pass, and you will be inevitably drawn into the vortex of world affairs, and your movements and interests will touch at every angle those of men and women of different nations and races in the world; and the life of isolation is a thing of the past."

Speaking next of the purpose and function of a University in India, Mr. *Venkataramana Rao* said that the primary object set for the University was to extend the domain of knowledge of its *alumni* and to initiate them into sciences, by far the most munificent of the gifts of the West. But this task could not be performed without introducing the students to the literature of the West. In the company of its poets and artists and in the atmosphere of its patriots and prophets a new outlook of life and a new ethical perspective were imparted to youth. The first fruits of this new culture were a moral zeal and a desire to judge society and social institutions in the light of ideals of liberty and justice. The function of a University was also to provide equipment for life. The demand for utilitarian education eclipsing the desire for liberal culture was, however, only a passing phase.

Referring then to research as a function of the University, Mr. *Venkataramana Rao* said, "the movement of research is in its infancy in India. While our achievements are by no means humble the importance of research and its potential value for India in the new world order to enable her to take her rightful place in the Commonwealth of Nations have not been sufficiently appreciated. Apart from

the contribution which scientific research makes towards material advance it is also not sufficiently realised that 'scientific research, as a social effort, is radical by its very nature and will do as much as anything else to bring about transformations in society without alienating people by the use of political notions.'"

Mr. Venkataramana Rao next stressed a University's attitude towards the culture and civilisation of its country. "With the best knowledge and equipment which has been imparted to you in the University, you should not remain strangers and aliens in your own land, without desire or capacity to enter into your own inheritance and preserve the continuity of your traditions. Moreover, our contacts with other nations and with the new idealism that is abroad everywhere have kindled in us a desire not only to share in the intellectual wealth of nations but also to contribute to it. The renaissance in India sums up the complex of forces and motives that mark the birth of a new life in our midst. The Universities have to take part in the movement, clarify its aims, strengthen its purpose, shape its ideals and supply its energy. A University is an organ of national life and culture and not its adverse critic. In other countries it fulfils its higher purpose by entering, as it were, into the heart and soul of the nation. It cannot afford to do otherwise in India."

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

"The new order," Mr. Venkataramana Rao, continuing, said, "will be a world order. It has a cosmopolitan outlook and is collectivistic in character. It secures for men, irrespective of their status and development, certain fundamental rights and liberties as inalienable attributes of world citizenship and humanity. It is not new in content but in comprehension, not in substance but in the principles of structure. In one of the Upanishads there is a description of the tree that has roots in heaven and grows downwards towards the earth. This tree is a symbol of the new order. In the architecture of the new world we reverse the principle of the old. We begin with the conception of world society and go down to nation, community and citizen. We must make the world consciousness and unity permanent terms of our thinking and the basic factors in our social life. Thus alone we can save the new society from the dangers that menaced the old. As the Poet Tagore says, "There is only one history, the history of Man. All national histories are merely chapters in the larger one."

"All the contradictions and calamities of our civilization arise from the fact that modern societies are primarily competitive and their main method of self-expression is struggle; their main endeavour is aggression." The only remedy for the perpetual contradictions of civilization and the only escape from constant crisis in the body politic lie in making the world idea the foundation and in building the lesser units of nation and community on its basis. Our nationalism should not be a reaching forth for a higher level against forces of gravitation but a coming down from the higher. Our communalism should be a subsidiary factor in nationalism and not a rival to it. Thus only we can inaugurate an era of history without war, of economics without want, of society with room and opportunity for every individual to develop.

"The introduction of the world idea in the context of the Indian situation will present you with some of the most difficult problems that statesmanship has ever been called upon to solve, he added. We in India are yet struggling to realise complete nationhood. Unless you attack the problem with a determination to win through and are prepared for radical and even revolutionary changes in society, you may be unable to adjust yourselves to the demands of the world society."

Stating that culture is the racial genius manifesting universal values in the concrete setting of historic circumstances—the soul of a people expressing the world idea in its native tongue, the speaker said the problem of unity expressing itself in the fusion of cultures and in the development of a larger consciousness was not a political but essentially a spiritual problem. The working out of an Indian culture transcending yet retaining the attributes of its component cultures was our characteristic way of fulfilling the world demand. Our art, music, literature best expressed our highest self when they were grounded in the unity behind the diversity." Concluding, he referred to the home as a great school and said: "In the university of the home women are the *gurus* and guardians of the new generation. On their vision depends the future of the race."

The Mysore University Convocation

The Convocation of the Mysore University was held on the 18th. October 1948 in the Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore, H. H. the Maharaja, the Chancellor, presiding. Sir J. C. Ghosh, Director of the Indian Institute of Science, delivered the address to the new graduates.

After the degrees were conferred, Sir J. C. Ghosh, delivering the address, first referred to the invaluable services rendered by the late Mr. N. S. Subba Rao, Vice-chancellor of this University, who "has been one of the builders of the University and has wielded an immense influence for good upon a generation of students who will willingly cherish his memory."

BENGAL'S TRAGIC PLIGHT

Sir J. C. Ghosh then gave a detailed description of the conditions of life in Calcutta—that city of palaces—where, he remarked, a drama was being played by the men and women of every condition of life—the newly rich, the well-fed worker, the hungry and the dying poor, generous citizens and noble volunteers working hard in hundreds of free kitchens which received from Governmental stores on payment, four ounces of cereals per day for each person fed and behind the curtains in the homes of the petty clerk, the ill paid school master and the impecunious lawyer, men, women and children half-starving but too proud to come out in the open and beg for food. This was the grim tragedy; but to one who looked deeper it portrayed as nothing else could, the character and culture of the Indian people.

Speaking on the conditions here, Sir J. C. Ghosh observed that it was a relief to return to Mysore where a beneficent administration had carefully made plans well ahead to avert a similar disaster. Paying a tribute to Mysore Government, he stated that it was held even in ultra-democratic circles that, while in British India, the Government did too little for the people, the Mysore Government did so much for her people as to leave them little to do for themselves. They had the assurance that a competent government was tackling this difficult situation leaving them all free to pursue their own avocation. A food policy and a food department should be the *sine qua non* of every civilised Government.

Continuing, Sir J. C. Ghosh said that any State planning for the welfare of of its citizens should begin with food, adequate food for all, and such a policy was the spear-head of movement for all-round prosperity. He criticised the tendency of producing money-crops, depending for foodgrains on other countries and the nemesis has, therefore, overtaken them. It was a crime in the circumstances not to get the most that one could not of the soil. They had come to the parting of ways; the war and the famine had created a universal yearning for a new order, and it was imperative that they should make a decision between a philosophy of life which led to pathetic contentment and fatal complacency and a philosophy which made human society a purely secular and rational organisation thriving on scientific knowledge and efficiency.

MYSOORE STATE'S EXAMPLE

Nowhere had planned development, the speaker added, met with greater success in India than in the model State of Mysore, and he referred to the development made with foresight, of its natural resources in power, water, minerals and forest products. The foundations had been truly laid, things of vital importance belonged to no one in particular but were there for the good of all; and here the State and the people were one, even though in moments of passion they might say that they were not.

"Believe me", Dr. Ghosh continued, "when I say that there is no better solvent for mental inertia than scientific training and education. I hold the view that life in India will be stagnant if we fail to assimilate the characteristics of the present age, which consists in applying the principles, properties and products revealed by scientific research to industries and agriculture; that stagnation is the halfway house to death and to ignore science which has changed the national economy and cultural levels of the rest of the civilised world, by invading every industry, craft and art, will be to invite effacement."

Continuing, he said that to-day the purpose and content of education should not be the spread of culture which was mostly the relic of a dead past, when science for practical everyday purposes did not exist. The aim should be to find out what an average boy or girl was good for, what he or she could do that was useful and

worth doing and how he or she could be helped and fitted to be able to do so. New adjustments had also become imperative in their higher education, primarily aiming at the moving target of the future employment market, if it were not to miss its mark. Employment for the individual was a psychological necessity and the output from each type of higher educational institution must be planned ahead in relation to anticipated requirements of highly trained personnel for industries, transport, agriculture and the so-called learned professions. In India, they had the familiar tragedy of thousands of educated men who failed to get employment suited to their training and then trying to eke out a living in the over-crowded lawcourts. The conviction had now become universal in England that finding employment for the individual was a national obligation and the Beveridge plan of social security was possible of fulfilment only on this basis.

WORK BEFORE THE YOUTH

Concluding, Sir Ghosh said that the defeat of the Axis Powers was in sight and in India would remain after the peace, the powerful Axis combination of poverty, ignorance, and disease; and a Government with a war mentality was essential to defeat this evil combination and liquidate them within a fixed period of time. He hoped that right decision would be taken. And then, young graduates, Sir Ghosh emphasised, you would all be called upon to become soldiers for this campaign. He wished them this joy of battle to become leaders who would look forward and not look back and not to lay down their banner until they had won this war. The future of their State, of Mother India, was bound with their own future. Let them go forth, with ideals and courage and might success but not necessarily happiness attend their efforts.

The Travancore University Convocation

The highlight of the Fifth Annual Convocation of the Travancore University which was held at Trivandrum on the 27th. October 1943 was the conferment of Honorary Degrees on an eminent jurist and a well-known educationist.

On the opening of the Convocation, the honorary degrees were conferred on Sir Maurice Gwyer and Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan, followed by the conferment of other degrees in law, education, science and arts. Presentation of medals and prizes over, the address of Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter, Advocate-General of India, was read on his behalf by Mr. H. C. Papworth.

Addressing the new graduates, Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter said that the University life fifty years ago was dull, dreary and uninspiring. There was no guidance, no conscious effort to train the youthful mind and no plan for individual development. The sole business of the teacher was to deliver lectures at crowded classes and the sole aim of the undergraduate was to pass the examination.

Continuing, Sir Brojendra observed: "Compare those conditions with what the State of Travancore has provided for you to-day. The undergraduates here are the wards of the university where their body and mind are sought to be developed on sound lines, according to plan and with conscious solicitude. They pursue their studies in cheerful surroundings. Your residence and health are the concern of the college and the university. You have arrangements for games and excursions and you have extra-curricular activities for social service. You are trained here for good citizenship on the profoundly true maxim that the most precious capital of the State is the brain of the youth. A new and fuller way of life awaits you and you have been equipped for it by the university. In after years you will be in possession of happy memories. I wish you to ponder over what the university has done for you and what is expected of you in return."

PERFECT UNITY OF INTEREST

"As you know," Sir Brojendra proceeded "the State of Travancore is not the property of any human being. It is dedicated to Sri Padmanabhaswami and His Highness Sri Chitra Tirunal is the trustee. Dedication to the deity means that the State has to be ruled as happily as it has always been ruled by King Marthanda Varma and his descendants, for the benefit of the people. It is not a case of the trustee being himself the beneficiary. Here, in Travancore, there is between the ruler and the subject, perfect unity of interest. The ruler serves Sri Padmanabhaswami by serving the people and not by personal aggrandisement. What ensures

for the benefit of the people is a question which has to be determined in the light of existing conditions for the time being. In any case, the will of the people, as expressed by their leaders, is always an important factor in such determination. And you, young graduates, are destined to be such leaders. If you realise this, you will realise your responsibility and your obligations of the State. Your responsibility is the greater when you further realise that Travancore is not a feudal state, but highly advanced, and in some respects probably the most advanced part of India. I do hope you will nobly fulfil your part and thus vindicate the role of your university as the nursery of useful citizens and leaders of your people."

Discussing the various ways in which the young graduates could usefully employ their energies, Sir Brojendra said: "In considering this question we Indians have to keep some fundamental facts in mind. An era in the stage of human progress is coming to an end and a new era is about to begin. We have been out of the main stream; we are in the backwaters. Big questions like permanent peace, international settlement, collective security, world federation and so on are outside our ken. The Atlantic Charter does not apply to us. We are not of the west nor is our civilization or culture based upon western conceptions and certainly not upon western practices. We are politically dependent and economically depressed. Nevertheless we can usefully adopt President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms as our aims in life—freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech and freedom of worship. Our political subjection and economic depression may be serious handicaps in the pursuit of these aims but as an ideal they are worth striving for. I cannot think of a higher ideal for our people.

THE FOUR FREEDOMS

"If you, young graduates, keep the Four Freedoms in view, you will find that your energies will not remain idle. Young graduates, you have much to understand, much to destroy and much to create. I do not know the conditions in Travancore, but were it in northern India, I would exhort you, in the first instance, to free public life of corruption and charlatany, before you begin to create. The best way to make political advance is not by written constitutions but by just advancing with clear ideas and firm steps. You, young graduates, have to assume that leadership. The attribute of leadership is not accumulation of knowledge but informed and balanced thinking as a guide to action. Your intelligence and activities have to be creative if you are to create the country's future. Such activities must not be in bondage to the dead past, but the past is to be used as a preparation for the future. Your organized intelligence is to create healthy public opinion to the end, that the masses may aspire to a higher standard of life and the leisured classes may not shrink from labour.

"I now come to President Roosevelt's second freedom from fear. The fear we in India have to guard against is different from the President's fear. It is not fear of aggression by unscrupulous neighbours, but fear of internal forces of disintegration. And they are many. Disunion, selfish sectionalism, religious prejudices or communalism, privileges, vested interests, and above all, intolerance. These are all impediments to ordered progress. It is up to us, who have received benefits of education, to find the remedy. You youths of Travancore, can fight these malignant forces in the State, and with the help of sympathetic and enlightened ruling house, it may be possible for you to rid your society of the fear. Remember, we have considerable leeway to make up if we are to establish a society where we can live our own life according to the genius and traditions of our people. We cannot afford the luxury of perpetual quarrel. You, young men and women, must make up your mind to succeed where your elders failed."

Sir Brojendra next proceeded to discuss in detail freedom from fear, freedom of speech and freedom of worship and said that His Highness, in throwing open State-controlled temples to all sections of the Hindu community had set an example for all India. Freedom of worship was perfectly secure in the State. The means of securing freedom of speech was the promotion of unity and elimination of misunderstanding and suspicion. There was no reason why in the State of Travancore there should not be complete understanding between all its people since the ruler was at one with the people.

"PRESERVE INDIA'S HERITAGE"

Sir Brojendra, concluding, exhorted the enlightened youths of the State to exert themselves to preserve the heritage of Indian culture. It was one of the important aims of the ancient Indian system of education. Above all, it was your business to preserve and enrich their literature and to express themselves in the

language of the people so that the gap between the classes and the masses might be steadily abridged and the whole people might form a happy unit of India's varied population.

Patna University Convocation

Emphasising that it must be one of the basic aims of a national system of education to impress on students the essential unity of India, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, in his Convocation address to the Patna University on the 26th November 1948 suggested creation of Faculty of Indian Culture as a compulsory branch of study in all universities. Dr. Jayakar called upon Indian universities to see that Mr Sargent's scheme for educational reconstruction was carried into execution after the war. In the course of his address, Dr. Jayakar said :

"We are meeting to-day under the stress of the extraordinary times caused by the war and the dreadful food situation in the country. If India had had her own wishes, to be drawn into the war with the full assent of her representatives, if, later, she had been accorded the position of an equal partner in the active prosecution of the war, if her moral approbation had been secured as a valuable asset in support of the great ideals for which the Allies are said to be fighting, we, all young and old, would not have been here to deliver or listen to Convocation addresses. Like the nationals of free countries amongst the Allies, we would have been on active service, either on the battlefield or elsewhere on the Front, each occupied according to his respective age and capacity.

THE SARGENT SCHEME

Problems of post-war education, he went on, were already engaging the official and public mind in India. It is a hopeful sign that Mr. John Sargent, the official adviser to the Government of India in matters of education—a personality which in the midst of petrified official environment, has succeeded in keeping alive the freshness of a democratic and liberal outlook—has published a well-thought-out scheme of post-war educational reconstruction, which is of the highest importance to Universities like you. This is not so, because his scheme holds out an early prospect of realising the ideals which Indian educationists have dreamt of for several years, but because it shows the right direction in which progress has to be made." Dr. Jayakar, after giving an outline of Mr. Sargent's scheme referred to the British scheme for post-war reconstruction of education and said, the former was a "very modest proposal" compared with a British scheme. India should be able to find the large sums necessary for carrying out Mr. Sargent's scheme. If India's resources were judiciously utilised, the cost of the scheme (over Rs. 200 crores a year) would not be beyond the capacity of the country."

"The Universities of India," Dr. Jayakar said, "are vitally interested in the early and active promotion of this scheme of national education. Apart from the employment which the scheme will provide for its alumni the ideals of education will be set on a firm footing of progress and freedom such as has never been hitherto enjoyed by our Universities. The Universities must therefore take great care to see that Mr. Sargent's plan does not share the fate of similar ones and find itself safely reposing in the archives of a somnolent secretariat.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS

Discussing the question how best Universities can help to promote plans of national education, Dr. Jayakar observed that any national system of education must have the following characteristics : (1) It must be based on the actual needs of the entire nation in all its stages and give an opportunity to every man, woman and children to develop personality to the utmost extent and to live a full life ; (2) Its objectives, methods and standards of performance must have relation to the facts of the complete life of the people, and to their economic, social and cultural needs, so that it touches society in all its various sections and cross sections ; (3) It must be based on a new conception of citizenship, the requirements of which will have to be carefully planned by the State and the people meeting together in a spirit of co-operation. (4) It must aim at creating a new type of administrator fitted to work the new constitution which will arise after the war. (5) It must at every stage of school and college life inculcate the necessity of national unity and peace and adopt practical methods to bring them about.

Proceeding, Dr. Jayakar said : We must keep in view the fact that the bulk of India's population lives in villages and there are about seven lakhs of them awaiting development. A nexus has to be created between the university and the villages. Experience has shown that village regeneration cannot proceed from under-educated or ill-educated men. It must be taken in hand by young men, whose instincts are sympathetic, training adequate and methods modern.

FACULTY OF INDIAN CULTURE

"Another vital factor to be kept in view in post-war reconstruction is the essential unity of India. We have amongst us various communities, but their cultures must meet on a common platform of corporate effort. It will be necessary to have at the university a faculty of study, aiming at what may be called the 'intellectual nation-building of the people.' I am speaking here from my own experience which is more or less that of every graduate of my time. How often have I felt that, though calling myself educated, I knew so little of the intellectual achievements of Indians outside my own race, community or province? How little do I know, for instance, of Urdu poets, past or present? What do I understand Tamil Literature, the delicate beauty of which is far famed? It must be a very defective system indeed which has not awakened in me quick centres of response to what my countrymen in other parts of India devoutly honour and adore. I would therefore recommend the creation of a "Faculty of Indian Culture" as a compulsory branch of study at the University. Experience has proved that there are many points of affinity between the culture of the important communities inhabiting India. The case of Muslims is an instance in point, notwithstanding the present desire of some of them to regard themselves as a different 'nation.' It may be pointed out that though originally the Muslim of pure descent came as an invader, he lived with the people and assimilated himself to his surroundings which, in their turn, reciprocated to his contact. The course of their history in this country is replete with instances of cultural and other occupations which they laboured, jointly with the Hindu, to pursue, perfect and perpetuate with the utmost devotion.

"It would be wise to employ our four years in college in acquiring a capacity for assimilating new ideas. Youth is the best gift of the Gods, says an old Upanishad. Let us rejoice in it while we have it. It is the great formative period of our life, brief but powerful. We are then able to face the world with feelings pure, and with ambitions unworldly. The bounds of our friendship, sympathy and fellow-feeling are not then set. We can push them as widely as we like until they encompass all that is worth knowing amongst our fellows. If we so wish it, we can pass out of our college, proud in the feeling that amongst our intimate friends we possess a Muslim, a Hindu, a Christian or a Parsi; that we can, on that account, instinctively feel, appreciate and respect the discordant features that make them seem so different from us. One such friendship formed at college will save us in later life from the extremes of racial or communal antipathy, which are always the result of ignorance and prejudice.

"I cannot do better than conclude this address by quoting the wise words of an ancient seer, one of the composers of a Vedic hymn, centuries ago. There is a great deal in this address which is of perennial importance. I am, therefore, justified in quoting an extract from it. 'Meet together; talk together, may your minds comprehend alike; common be your action and achievement; common be your thoughts and intentions; common the wishes of your hearts; so there may be thorough union among you.' (Rig Veda X-12-191.)

The Allahabad University Convocation

Delivering his address at the Convocation of the Allahabad University on the 27th November 1943, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, exhorted the graduates in these remarkable words:—

"If we are to have a durable peace after the war, if, out of the wreckage of the present, a new type of co-operative life is to be built on a global scale, then Science and Philosophy, the West and the East, must play their part. The intellectual life of the world, so far as Science and learning are concerned, is definitely internationalised and "whether we wish it or not an indelible pattern of unity has been woven into the society of mankind."

When the rapidly expanding materialism of the West touched the shores of India, towards the beginning of the last century, Dr. Roy observed, the two conceptions of life—the Eastern and the Western—were arrayed in a grotesque hostility. On the one hand, the effort of the East, in civilisation had been primarily meta-physical, the Eastern thesis was, that true betterment must come through the soul ; the West on the other hand, held to the view that man's betterment on earth must be achieved through a process of continuous political experiment, that to achieve the real good, a rational application of science, equity, and political theory was necessary. This Western method applied to India, had devastating results.

"But," Dr. Roy proceeded, "the moral effect of this Revolution" was even more devastating. We imitated to perfection, not merely the qualities that have brought material success to the Westerner, but also his most insignificant and ridiculous mannerisms. But the evil did not end there. In India, our inferiority had a counterpart in the arrogance of the Westerner : as we discarded self-confidence, that of the Westerner increased ; white pigmentation of the skin, at first only a symbol of material prosperity assumed, and was paid, the homage of divine attribute, until, to question the divinity of Western invention, decencies and ideals, was to question the New Incarnation, of which every white man became an apostle. Thus, in this country, a disastrous form of racial antagonism, involving colour, ensued.

"And yet the reality is that the East and the West cannot afford to ignore each other ; the continued expansion of Western ideas is inevitable ; technical and scientific education, on the Western methods, open up new avenues of knowledge and opportunity, which the East cannot overlook and which must to a large extent displace older traditions or schooling.

"If India is to exit, fulfil its mission and exert its vital humanising influence in the world of the future, if she is to successfully withstand the ever growing competition she must imbibe, the "best" which the West can give so that her own "best" may be doubly effective, so that India might assimilate Western ideas to the furtherance rather than to the destruction of her spiritual gifts.

NEWER PROBLEM

The problem that faces the nations of the East and the West to-day is how to win the war and at the same time preserve those intellectual ideal and standards, "those great things of the spirit." without which a military victory would in the end be nothing but ashes. History shows us that it is possible to lose a civilization while armies and navies are triumphant.

"The solution of this problem, Dr. Roy went on, namely the killing of barbarian Fascist Dictatorship and all that it signifies and yet saving the soul and culture of a nation rests with the Universities of the world, their teachers, research workers and students. "In 1881 the College of William and Mary in Virginia closed down its doors for nearly seven years. The battle of the Civil War had been fought up and down the Peninsula and had left the College in ruins ; and although it struggled to keep going during the bitter times of the Reconstruction it was finally overcome by financial catastrophe. But every morning during those seven years President Ewell rang the chapel bell. There were no students, the faculty had disappeared ; and rain seeped through the leaky roofs of the desolate buildings. But President Ewell still rang the bell. It was an act of faith. It was a gesture of defiance. It was a symbol of determination that the intellectual and cultural tradition must be kept alive even in a bankrupt world". "In every school, college and University of America to-day", says the above chronicler, "we need to hear the bell ringing".

The problem before the University teachers and students in India to-day is complex. They see a titanic war being waged which is called by Henry Agard Wallace a fight between a slave world and a free world an epic milestone in the march towards an even fuller freedom than the most fortunate people of the earth having hitherto enjoyed. The peace must mean a better standard of living for the common man not merely in the United States and the United Kingdom but also in Russia, India, China, Latin America not merely in the United Nations but also in Germany, Italy and Japan."

"The students of the Allahabad University naturally asks, "If this be the war aim and the peace aim, have I any task to perform in this epic struggle for freedom and if so, what and how." Let me try to study the mind of the student who asks this question. He has, in his study of History, Art, Literature and Philosophy, attempted to reach the Universal Truth ; in the laboratories he had patiently searched after Truth. He appreciates and understands, though he cannot

always express it in so many words, that 'the search of Truth and the weighing of values cannot be maintained in an atmosphere from which freedom had vanished.' He sees round him abject poverty and insecurity, sickness and squalid conditions and such social and economic distress in which human beings cannot be free. He had studied carefully, in the class room, Civics and Political Philosophy and has formulated high ideals for securing "the greatest good of the greatest number." He is convinced that scientific knowledge and Truth were originally meant to be implemented for the purpose of increasing the comforts and security of man. And yet he finds a world outside, where it is said, "science has corrupted our morals," where the Dictator while doing lip service to Universal Truth, to civilization, culture and morals, prostitutes them in order to suppress Truth, in order to forge newer and deadlier weapons for widespread destruction and human slaughter.

STUDENT'S HELPLESSNESS

"The student feels helpless in this world of contradictions and conflicts. He knows, he understands rivalries and competition in the class room and examination hall but he is staggered at meeting the stupendous conflicts arising from misunderstanding, selfishness and greed among races, communities and individuals. He finds himself hedged in by all forms of disabilities and restrictions, injustices and iniquities which set at naught all higher ambitions of securing a better and freer world to live in. In the absence of any creative opportunities, his mind collects a large number of dark emotions, hatred and fear, which refract thought; 'fear of the self, fear of the foreigner, fear of history and its possibilities, fear of freedom and of thought, fear of the unknown and undefinable—it is all one winding sheet of *Tamas*.' Fear is an unworthy feeling, for, out of it is born a sense of 'Frustration which leads to an Inferiority Complex, loss of self-confidence. But let me bear witness, as a result of my life's experience, that 'fear' can be controlled, confidence can be restored, even in a mind which is today distracted with fear. "Sages have controlled want, saints of self and the man of culture of the foreign and unfamiliar"; why not you and I? Merely to blame the Government and rest content is not a pleasant pastime, it is unworthy of moral beings. But the restoration of self-confidence requires supreme effort and resolution. Are you ready?

The remedy for all these ills, not in running away from or avoiding those social conditions where he had failed but to meet them broadside: not to avoid responsibilities for fear of further failures, but to undertake tasks, may be of smaller dimensions, than those which he had failed to fulfil.

"It is unfortunate that in this country, University education is mainly secular, "where a teacher may be so severed from the religious sympathy of the taught, that he must either be silent on the relations of man to a higher world or if he discusses them, he may be suspiciously heard or imperfectly understood." This is a serious handicap to our University education and must be remedied. We must impart to our students training in morals and discipline; how else can we produce leaders of thought and action, workers dedicated to the service of the Nation?

The University is justly regarded as the home for that freedom of spirit which is True Liberty—liberty to think, liberty to speak, liberty to teach. Therefore our future leaders of the country will be able to appreciate and respect such principles of Freedom to the extent they are disciplined, self-governed, self-reliant. Self-government, which we so earnestly desire, means not merely the privilege of governing others but the preliminary capacity of disciplining and governing oneself. Truest independence exists where authority is least assailed; enlightenment truly expresses itself through discipline.

"Finally, students of the University, you have been seekers after Truth. When you go out into the distracted world, do not give up this quest. Keep the doors of your mind wide open for the Universal Truth to reach its innermost recesses, and there you will find that after all there is no antagonism between Science and Philosophy, between the Western method of scientific analysis of external phenomena and the Eastern system of search of the ultimate verity of life by analysing the internal world. Indeed, with the progress of scientific knowledge, the findings of science are strengthening and not undermining the foundations of Philosophy. The two meet at a point where humanity stands as an indivisible unity. Therefore, science would fail in its noble task of promoting human brotherhood if it caters only to the animal instincts of man and be an instrument of destruction in the hands of politicians. Likewise, if philosophy do not foster a spirit of harmony and fraternity among mankind, on the basis of its spiritual oneness, it too would stultify its noble mission.

Thus, it lies with you to demonstrate the oneness of mankind; under your

guidance the East and the West will attempt to know each other's mind and assimilate the best features of each for their mutual well-being.

"Gentlemen, if we are to have a durable peace after the war, if, out of the wreckage of the present, a new type of co-operative life is to be built on a global scale, then Science and Philosophy, the West and the East must play their part. The intellectual life of the world, so far as Science and Learning are concerned, is definitely internationalised and "whether we wish it or not, an indelible pattern of unity has been woven into the society of mankind." Wendel Wilkie once said, "Man's welfare throughout the world is interdependent."

"From birth to death, we are surrounded by an invisible host—the spirits of men who never thought in terms of flags or boundary lines and who never served a lesser loyalty than the welfare of mankind.

"Graduates of Allahabad University, here is your task. Shake off your lethargy and discard your hesitating, halting Inferiority Attitude. If the newly developed historical science is correct, namely that Physical Geography of a country has a great effect on human activity and development, the sacred shores of Tribeni, the meeting place of three holy rivers, should lead your thoughts and activities towards Inter-Communal, Inter-Racial and Inter-National unity. Such unity does not imply a drab uniformity. Let strains of different culture and learning flow uninterrupted into one. May you never forget your rich inheritance from the time of Asoka, may you always preserve the treasures of the spirit, which you should hold in trust from the past, for the benefit of the generations to come.

The Annamalai University Convocation

The Thirteenth Convocation of the Annamalai University took place at the Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Annamalainagar on the 30th November 1943 with H. E. the Chancellor, *Sir Arthur Hope* in the chair, *Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetti*, K. C. I. E. delivered the Convocation Address.

Sir Shanmukham referred in his address to the war and the challenge of Fascism and Nazism to civilisation and the need to meet it. At the same time he made it clear that he was no "apologist for the British Empire." "How can I with any sense of self-respect enthuse over our position in the Commonwealth, he asked, when the men of our own race are subjected to the utmost humiliation in South Africa even before the blood which our valiant heroes shed in that very continent has become cold and frozen? But, he added, that notwithstanding all these he had no hesitation in advising the new graduates to give their unstinted help in the war effort. Enlightened self-interest and humanity were his reasons for making that appeal. With Japan on the side of the Axis' powers, no sensible Indian could delude himself about the fate that was sure to overtake their country in the event of a victory for the aggressor nations.

WAR AIMS AND PEACE REALITIES

Sir Shanmukham then referred to the global nature of the present war and of far reaching social reconstruction that was being promised and in fact was under active preparation. Political security for smaller countries and social security for individuals in every country were the main objectives of the New World Order being planned. The tragedy and travail of the First World War gave concrete shape to such ideals, and in the League of Nations and other international organisations men saw the instruments for shaping these ideals into live realities. But bitter disappointment soon overtook the World. The same old greed and unscrupulous diplomacy were in evidence at Geneva. The world need a second baptism of fire and had got it. Out of this ordeal, human civilisation must either emerge in a purified form or totally perish.

The speaker pointed out how voluntary social service by individuals can supplement and facilitate in their own way, the larger schemes for social security and human happiness now on the anvil. In his own experience he had come across the silent and unostentatious work done by Christian missionaries and nuns in remote and unheard of villages and hamlets; and he had often asked himself the question, "Why is it, that in spite of all its great philosophy the Hindu religion has not kindled this spirit in the hearts of its votaries?" The missionary spirit of social service seemed to be alive to their temperament and upbringing.

Was it because Hinduism was not a proselytising religion and they needed the zeal of the preacher to feel the call for service? Somehow this explanation did not satisfy him. The emergence of the Ramkrishna Mission had demonstrated that even in the Hindu fold, they could find men dedicating their life to the service of their fellowmen. Even if it failed to give them this urge for service, the culture that they had imbibed in the University must kindle this fire in their hearts. The man of culture knew that the noblest way of serving God was by service to man.

Sir *Shanmukham* then dwelt on the welcome progress of technological education in the country in the past and added that if the standard life of their people was to be raised all round, it was necessary that they should take the fullest advantage of scientific knowledge and discovery and make ample provision for study and research and training. But while he lay the fullest emphasis on this aspect of education, he was not prepared to accept the view that Universities must convert themselves and that general culture and the study of the humanities had no place in a modern University. With all the importance of Science, some at least of the Universities must preserve the cultural heritage of man and foster the study of the classics of literature, Art and History and Philosophy.

TAMIL STUDIES

At the time that the Annamalai University was established, the speaker continued, great hopes were entertained that the Annamalai University would henceforth be the centre of the ancient culture of the Tamil people and that special attention would be devoted there to the study of and research in the civilisation and literature of the Tamil country. "I may be pardoned for stating frankly," he said, "that this expectation has not materialised in sufficient degree. In my opinion, this University has succumbed to the temptation to fall in line with the stereotyped pattern. No University in the world can hope to deal in all branches of learning. Great Universities have each established a reputation in some chosen field of knowledge. Is it too much to expect that a University established in the Tamil country founded by the munificence of an eminent Tamilian should be looked upon as the repository of Tamil culture?" Sir *Shanmukham* added that it was only a few years ago that he had seriously attempted to study some of the Tamil Classics. He found that they were fit to rank among the immortal works of the world and he bitterly regretted his earlier neglect of the treasures of his own land. And in this connection, he also explained that he did not for a moment belittle the value of the study of English. English was likely to become the language of international contacts. He wished them to keep up the position that they had given to the English language in our educational system. But his point was that the study of the mother tongue need not and ought not to be relegated to a minor place.

EVILS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

"Of late there has been a revival of interest in the study of the vernacular languages and there is a spirit of renaissance in the different cultures of India." Sir *Shanmukham* said in conclusion: "I am not one of those who look upon this as a fissiparous tendency threatening the unity of India. In fact I consider that those who oppose this spirit are the enemies of Indian nationalism. For, they forget that Indian culture and Indian nationalism are the synthesis of different cultures and multi-national forces, each with great traditions and a strong individuality. The lamentable feeling of discord and bitterness which is so much in evidence to-day in our country is the direct consequence of the attempts of powerfully entrenched communities and groups to impose their own ideas and cultures on all the peoples of India. In the name of Nationalism they aim at suppressing others and perpetuating their own power and influence. Every country in the world has had at one time or another its own ruling class which was finally eliminated by the advent of Democracy. In India the caste system has moulded the pattern of our ruling classes and has perpetuated their power and monopoly. How soon India will attain Freedom and Democracy will depend not on the promises or good faith of the foreign rulers, but upon the speed with which our own powerfully entrenched communities and classes give up their greed and monopoly or are annihilated by the irresistible forces of Democracy."

The Andhra University Convocation

Delivering the Convocation address of the Andhra University at Guntur on the 11th December 1943, Mr. *S. V. Ramamurthi*, Adviser to H. E. the Governor of Madras, said that in the adventure into the realm of spirit, India leads all nations. He appealed to young men and women of India to keep alive the quest of the Absolute on which India started some 3,000 years ago.

Mr. *Ramamurthi* also referred as the "gravest problem in India now" the way by which agricultural and industrial development on a large and quick scale might be achieved and drew attention to India's natural resources and her mature man-power. It would be the privilege of Andhra young men and women, he said, not only to keep burning the torch of their ancient culture but also to light new torches of economic life.

Mr. *S. V. Ramamurthi*, after congratulating those who had received degrees and diplomas that day and wishing them all success in life, said: "The University is an ancient institution in India. The Buddhist Universities of Nalanda and Taxila were of the type of the Mediaeval Universities in Europe. But earlier than the Buddhist model was the forest Ashram of India where individual teachers pursued the search for knowledge and initiated younger men in the search. In the Upanishadic times, thinkers sought to realise the spirit behind mind and matter. In the Buddhist times, they sought to understand mind and matter. In modern Universities, mind sought to control matter. The University then had always used mind as the instrument but its jurisdiction has changed from spirit to mind and then to matter.

"The Andhra University, like its fellow-universities in India, has both an inherited and an acquired tradition. India is to-day the meeting place of the cultures of India and of Europe. A Cambridge don, who visited India, China and Japan to study their cultures, said that the contrast in civilisation was not between the East and the West but between India and the rest of the world. Dr. *Whitehead*, a well known Mathematical Philosopher told me some twenty years ago, that the future of the world seemed lie in the hands of India and China and that Japan and Turkey would probably follow but not lead. Recently, an American observer said that Japan was quick but shallow, that China was profound but slow and that India was both profound and quick. I think it reasonable to hold that in the coming world synthesis to which the war is paving the way, India, in spite of her economic poverty, social disintegration and political distress, yet, by virtue of her mature spiritual realisation, will be as much at least as China, the protagonist of Asia *vis-a-vis* Europe and America. At the same time, by virtue of her connection with Britain, India is the one country in Asia which has had the most intimate contact with Europe. India is thus amphibian in its culture, functioning both in the manner of Asia and of Europe. This position gives the Indian Universities unusual opportunities and responsibilities."

"KEEP ALIVE THE QUEST FOR THE ABSOLUTE"

The subject that interested the ancient Indian thinkers, Mr. *Ramamurthi* continued, was the unseen world of spirit. The formula for the relation of the seen and the unseen which India enunciated in the words, *Atman is Brahman*, is the highest summit of knowledge which man has reached. Mind, the perceiver, sees not only its counterpart, matter, the perceived, but also, That which is behind both mind and matter. In this adventure into the realm of spirit, India leaves China behind. If India were lost, the world would be maimed. Even China could not make up on behalf of Asia. Therefore, he would ask the young men and women of India and of Andhra to keep alive the quest for the Absolute on which India started some three thousand years ago.

For thirty years, Mr. *Ramamurthi* went on to say, he had been a follower of this quest. The method he had followed was the method of Mathematics. Mathematics is the bridge between philosophy and commonsense, between the abstruse and the simple, between the transcendent and the immanent. India discovered the Zero, the decimal system and the negative number—which are the essentials of arithmetic. Europe discovered the complex number which is at the basis of the dimensions of geometry. There was now a welding of Indian and European knowledge. The Relativists led by Eddington and Jeans had recognised that the unseen is as real as the seen, that the experience of a mystic is as valid

as that of a scientist and that the method of science may be adapted also to the examination of one's inner vision. Eddington had suggested that mystics might build images through which their vision might be crystallised.

TIME IS TWO-DIMENSIONAL

Mr. *Ramamurthi*, continuing, said that he believed that it was possible to build bridges between the inner and the outer experience of man. He was not content with differentiation of the world into time, space and matter but regarded mind as an additional fundamental entity of the Universe. The world of mind as well as time, space and matter had been to him for many years a great forest where he was lonely and yet enjoyed his loneliness. Recently he had found in it a new plant which he took this opportunity of mentioning. They had for ages contemplated on the nature of time. They have never yet thought of it except as an undifferentiated stream, a one dimensional entity. "Man perceives", Mr. *Ramamurthi* said, "the rhythm of time. He has not realised that he cannot perceive time if he has not within himself not the same but an answering rhythm of time, as length answers breadth on the floor of a room. The discovery I venture to present to you is that time is two dimensional, even as space is three dimensional. I see this as a fact, I present it to you as a theory. It is a theory which is of value not merely to philosophers, mathematicians and saints but to common men. How long have we been groping in India for a bank to the stream of time in which we are born and die and yet are born again, ever floating down the stream? If only we could reach the bank, this endless stream of *samsara* could be transcended. The bank does exist because time is two dimensional. The two dimensions are the time within and the time without. Nature has a time rhythm within itself which is universal. It is the rhythm of a clock. If time changes in one clock, it changes in all clocks. But not so in the passage of man's consciousness. The duration of the world and the duration of man's consciousness are different. The pattern of life is set to two different rhythms—the rhythm of nature and the rhythm of man, the rhythm of matter and the rhythm of mind. Nature makes the woof. Man makes the weft. Time, the rhythm of life, is, therefore, two dimensional."

Passing on to the world without, Mr. *Ramamurthi* said that the knowledge they had inherited through science had during the last century or more revolutionised man's manner of living in the world. It had done this by a deeper and fuller understanding of nature than ever before. This understanding had been continuously put to practical use. Many of the amenities of civilised life which they had learnt to enjoy but could not get during the war were the products of Science. They had even ceased to be self-sufficient in some of their vital needs. "We import food and oil for lighting. We depend on large machinery for our clothing. We cannot build without imported or machine made steel and cement. Locally grown drugs have been replaced by synthetic and imported drugs. Our production from our own resources has not kept pace with our growing needs. The result had been shown by the economic stress of the present war. The margin of production over our needs has been so thin that it has given way. There is further a growing population. The gravest problem in India now is how to achieve agricultural development on a large and quick scale. This is the post-war reconstruction which has begun to occupy urgent attention. The war has shown our deficits in various economic directions. The tempo of development has to change. The content and direction of education need also to be recast." Mr. *Ramamurthi* then drew their attention to the natural resources of India and her mature manpower and remarked that it would be the privilege of the young men and women of Andhra not only to keep the torch burning of their ancient culture but also to light new torches of economic life.

SCHEMES OF ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. *Ramamurthi* proceeding said :

"Let me mention to you some significant directions in which the Government of Madras are making new economic paths in the area which this University serves. The Agency tract has rich soil and good climate. The one evil genius which has kept this tract undeveloped is the malarial mosquito. From experimental work done by this Government in Vizagapatam and in Malabar we are now confident that malaria can be controlled at a small cost on the scale of one rupee a person a year. Here there is a new colony for the surplus population of the Andhra Districts which will do away with the need to send coolies to Burma—a process which is not only a mark of our economic inefficiency but has also led to the branding of all Indians as coolies. We should reclaim then the waste land in the

Agency tract. Then again we have great rivers, the Godavary and the Krishna. It is to the credit of a great British Engineer, Cotton, that these rivers are used for irrigation. But as yet, only 5 per cent of the water that reaches the anicuts at Dowleishwaram and Bezwada is used and the remaining 95 per cent is wasted into the sea. Hence Government are investigating a scheme to impound water in a reservoir at Polavaram. There are high water-falls in the Agency tract of which one is on the Machkund river and is nearly 600 feet high. Government propose to harness this water-fall and develop hydro-electricity by a scheme which may be ultimately bigger than the Pykhara Scheme. On this the industrial regeneration of the Andhra area may be built. We need fertilisers for new land as well as old cultivated land. There is room to start a fertiliser factory by fixing nitrogen from the air. The use of sun-power stored in plants for lighting has been brought into vogue.

"I have spoken to you a little while ago of the vertical division of the universe into mind, time, space and matter. Our ancient seers have also made a horizontal division of the universe in the form of the five elements—*prithivyapasthejovayurakash*—namely, land, water, sun, air and ether. The five schemes of economic reconstruction that I have mentioned amount to a reclamation of the five elements, the *panchabhutas*. This horizontal division of the world is as relevant in economics as the vertical division is in science. May the Andhra University build its thought and action on both these analyses and develop both. Science and Economics!

"A little while ago, I made a pilgrimage to Bhadrachalam, and there saw, enacted as in a vision, a new chapter of the Ramayana. Once more in the Dandakaranya, Lakshmi is held captive by the demon, headed by Masikasura, the Demon Mosquito. Rama stands on the banks of the Godavary and sees Lakshmi wasted in the sleep of Andhra hill, wasted in the purposeless downpour of Andhra waterfalls, wasted in the untapped fertility of the air, wasted in the unused light of the Sun. To rescue her, Rama raises a new army of administrators and teachers, engineers and doctors. Doctors trample on Masikasura and hold him firmly down. Engineers impound rivers, harness water-falls and bend to their will and purpose the giants of the forest. Teachers teach new learning, new agriculture and new industry. Administrators help to build prosperous villages and famous towns. Lakshmi rises and stands in the centre of the vision, clad in the garb of a homely matron, with a brass pot in the crook of her left arm, with a brass lamp held by her right arm, giving food and light to her children. By her side stands Rama smiling—He from whom all shall merge. Towards such a consummation, Andhra graduates, leaders of the coming decades. I ask you to dedicate your vision, will and vigour!"

The Dacca University Convocation

Dr. M. Hassan, Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, made the following observation addressing the Convocation of the University at Dacca on the 6th. December 1943 :—

"The wastage in our educational institutions is appalling and it is high time for a thorough examination of the whole problem from an entirely different angle. A complete change in our attitude towards high education in this country is essential.

"No ideals, no systems imported from abroad however successful and valuable they might have proved in the other countries, will suit India to-day; she must evolve her own system and method of education which will combine the finest and most valuable traditions of the East and the West."

"The University of Dacca," Dr. Hassan observed, "has passed through many and varied difficulties during the past twelve months, and its difficulties are by no means over. Communal differences which had been an ugly and discreditable feature of the life of Dacca during last two years found their way among students of the University this year and there were free fights between two sections of students in Curzon Hall and the Central buildings which resulted in injuries to a number of students one of which proved fatal. The University has no excuse or explanation to offer for this outrageous behaviour of its students who, in their excitement, forgot all the noble principles which should differentiate an educated man from an illiterate and uncultured boor.

"The incidents of this year will always remain shameful blots on the fair name of this institution and the source of sorrow and shame to every one of its members. We can only hope that our students have fully realised the enormity of their transgression and they will do their best to re-establish the honour and prestige and the good name of their 'alma mater' by their laudable conduct in future. I am happy to say that the present feelings and relations between the students of the University are very cordial and encourage us to believe that troubles of this kind will never again heap shame and sorrow upon the University.

TRUE FUNCTION

"The true function of the University," Dr. Hassan continued, "is to develop the mind, to free it from the shackles of narrow prejudice ignorance and false conceits; to eradicate from the human mind those animal impulses which motivate the actions of savages either in wild jungles or in the moral wilderness of so-called civilised countries.

"In India," Dr. Hassan regretted, "our students do not come to the Universities even for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. The result is a tragic wastage of money, energy and opportunity. Our fundamentally wrong educational outlook is responsible for the failure of our Universities. The difference between an Indian University and Oxford, for example, does not lie in the intellectual capacity of the students or the superiority of formal academic instruction: from my own personal experience I can say that many of the lectures in Oxford were definitely inferior to some of the lectures which I had attended in India. The real difference lies elsewhere. But the dreamers and idealists which Oxford produces give very creditable account of themselves when they leave the sheltered cloisters and the pleasant nooks of their 'Alma Mater' because when they come to grips with the realities of the world they find themselves to be interpreters of a much wider and more valuable experience of life than that which they were supposed to possess. The dreamer becomes the man of action with an unfailing belief in the divinity and nobility of human nature and an abiding faith in the eternal truth of the principles which were unconsciously inculcated in him at the University and from which he never departs in the most trying and dangerous situations.

"I have mentioned Oxford only as an example because I know it intimately. This conception of education is very old and is not confined to England or Greece; in the East, particularly in India, all our education had been imparted and received in this spirit. Even to-day we can find in our indigenous educational institutions some scholars whose cyclopaedic knowledge and breadth of vision, whose insight into the subtleties of human nature and the working of the human mind will astonish those who are brought up in that system of education which is prevalent in our colleges and Universities. Those of our friends who are dissatisfied with University education in India and who point out to us incontrovertible proof of the failure of the Universities to impart really valuable and useful education forget that Indian Universities have not been given a fair chance. Our Universities, as I said before, were created for a very definite and utilitarian purpose in the early years of the British rule in India, and they have more than fulfilled that purpose, and now our public services cannot absorb all the clerks which our Universities produce.

"University education has been progressively degenerating during the last two or three decades because pupils come to Universities with an object which they and their parents know is not going to be fulfilled in most cases, namely the securing of a post in Government service. Thus there is a sense of frustration and helplessness and a growing feeling of apathy in our students at the very start of their University careers. They do not come to the University to receive education, they come to it because they have nothing else to do.

The Agra University Convocation

The following are extracts from the Convocation Address delivered by Pandit Amaranatha Jha at Agra on November 20, 1943:—

In addressing a gathering composed mostly of those engaged in the bringing up of youth and of young persons on the threshold of their career in life, I may without apology spend some time in considering whether centres of education have any contribution to make which may help in the restoration of ultimate values, in

the return of sanity, in the realisation of peace and joy.—peace which knows no fear, joy which feeds the sacred flame of love. That educational institutions are capable of making this contribution is amply proved by the attempts made last year from more than one quarter to disturb and dislocate their work and prevent them from functioning. Whoever is reactionary, whoever stands for the privileges of the few, whoever is opposed to light and freedom is naturally the foe of those centres which encourage liberty of thought and liberty of faith and which are equally hospitable to all shades of belief. A University must be such a centre, a clearing-house of ideas, a haven to which repair all who voyage on the restless seas of thought and adventure and action and return for the invigoration of their faith, the renewal of their spiritual strength. A University will cease to be true to itself if it allows either a party or a group or even the state to dominate its life, colour its ideas, influence its beliefs. It cannot be indifferent to the currents and cross-currents of contemporary life, but it should be detached ; it cannot be cold towards the happenings of the day, but it should remain cool ; it cannot be distant and aloof from the present, but it should retain its wisdom. In the dull and endless strife of every day, under its ferment and agitation, it should be a place of strength and peace, of thought and certainty of faith rather than a twilight of opinion. Unfortunately even centres of education have been threatened by barbarous dissonance and the canker of sectarian and communal bitterness. What are grandiloquently called ideological differences are allowed to break up the unity, peace and concord that should characterise these centres of light and liberty. These reasons persuade me to ask whether in the reconstruction of society and the planning of a new order, the Universities have not a contribution to make. It is without significance that in the many committees which have been set up in this country to suggest plans for the planning of the future, educationists have been studiously excluded, as though any scheme has the slightest chance of success unless the bringing up of youth is made one of the cardinal subjects for discussion and decision.

How is youth to be brought up ? What ideals ought to be placed before the rising generation ? The sanctity of life, of all life but specially of human life ; a sense of reverence for the superhuman Energy or Spirit or Divinity that orders creation and ensures its continuity ; love of virtuous conduct ; a spirit of sacrifice for the larger good ; faith in man's high destiny ; discipline, self-control, balance ; the feeling that while they are architects of the future, they are also inheritors of the past ; the aspiration to be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect—this and nothing less than this should be the spirit animating those who train young men and women who are to shine above the light of the morning star. That evil will continue to exist, that treachery, deceit, falsehood, and all the other items in the catalogue of the earthly, sensual, and devilish, will not be completely destroyed, that there will always be war and bloodshed, that men cannot become angels—all this may be recognised, and yet one need not desist from ensuring that the youths' thoughts are fed on what is beautiful and good, manly and exalted. The emphasis placed, during the period since the industrial Revolution and the rise of science, on utilitarian education has tended to throw into the background what used to be the most significant part of training, the teaching of the humanities. Indeed, so dominant is the position of science that even history, philosophy, and literature have been forced to don a pseudo-scientific garb, and the study of these subjects is now accompanied with the due ritual of laboratory, graphs, and statistics. I am far from decrying the value of scientific studies. But I do maintain that the most important subjects of study are not things, but rather man, human thoughts, human ideas, the universe within first and only afterwards the universe without. We must know ourselves to begin with and then we may try to know other things. We must learn to be men, and only then can we truly be scientists, priests, or politicians. I plead for humane studies, which include not merely pure literature, philosophy, and history, but also archaeology, anthropology, numismatics, epigraphy, psychology, and geography ; I wish the classics to regain their lost position ; I hope that the classics will once more enable us to draw out of them elevated thoughts, noble emotions, and the strength that comes from contact with the highest achievements of the human soul. From them we shall develop our historical and cultural background, and derive "the understanding of human nature, the broadening of human interests, and the better appreciation of the purpose of human life." From them, too, we shall call back the spirit and the courage, the faith and the power with which brave men and women in ancient days faced perils similar to those that surround us. In them we shall discover examples of fortitude, of calm, patient, uncomplaining suffering, of noble rage, of resistance against tyranny, of

dignity, of humility, of the soul on its knees, of the self ever-expanding and not contracting, of the eternal youthfulness and freshness of beauty—all expressed in words that call to us and find a response within us across the wide stretch of centuries. From them we realise that where our forbears greatly dared we can dare too, what they nobly suffered we too can suffer, what ills they survived we also can survive. Above all, from them we learn how to conduct ourselves, how to live and die in the high ancient fashion.

To the questions, what is the right life for man, what is good for man, how to throw off the brute inheritance, what are his obligations to the 'inner law' of the heart, what is his portion in the physical universe, how can he attain a higher degree of perfection, what is the eternal purpose,—to these vital questions the classics provide an answer, whether in precept or tale or myth, with powerful confidence that comforts and convinces us. We go to the classics for wisdom. We need not all be interested in Tully, or Ulpian at the best ; nor puzzle over the doctrine of the *enclitic* *Da* ; nor seek inspiration from *dukṛin karane*. The specialist may derive what comfort he can from such subtle niceties of grammar and rhetoric. Indeed, the grammarian and the rhetorician are in the main responsible for making the classics formidable, unattractive, dry as dust, dull as ditchwater, lifeless as cinders and ashes, when they are in fact bright and effulgent, pure and pellucid as streams full of stars. It is not grammar or language or text or even the political or economic aspects of classical scholarship that are of main importance ; they have their uses, even as the dissecting of a corpse is of use ; but one values the classics chiefly because even after the lapse of centuries it is still as true now as it was in the time of Cicero who wrote in his letter to his son ; "You are going to visit men who are supremely men." In the classics we are brought into touch with men who were supremely men. Whether we spend our time in the company of the poets and dramatists or thinkers who lived lives of peace and content on the heights of the Himalayas or on the banks of the Ganges ; whether we listen to the discussion at the momentous Supper in the house of Agathon or walk along the studious walks and shades of the olive grove of Academe ; whether in the high and palmy state of Rome we hear the Virgilian muse or Ovid the soft philosopher of love ; love whether we lose ourselves in the words of Hafiz, half rapture half meditation and all a wondrous exaltation, or derive wisdom from the writings of the other 'nightingale of the groves of Shiraz,' the leaves of whose rose-garden cannot be touched by the tyranny of autumnal blasts—wherever our taste or fancy may take us and in whichever classic we steep ourselves, rigorous teachers, in Matthew Arnold's vivid phrase, will purge our faith and trim our fire, show us the high, white star of 'Truth, and there bid us gaze, and there aspire.

The classics of India tell us of the Avalokiteshwaras who refuse Nirvana for themselves till all have passed into bliss. We hear of Yudhishtira, declining to enter into heaven unless his faithful dog was permitted also to get in and preferring to descend into hell if his wife and brothers were to remain in hell. "I cannot tarry," he said, "where I have them not."

Bliss is not blissful, just and mighty Ones,
Save if I rest beside them. Heaven is there
Where Love and Faith make heaven.

There is the scene of Rama, on the eve of his coronation, willingly renouncing succession in favour of his younger brother so that his father's pledged word be kept.

"To Bharat's hand I gladly would resign
My bride, my life, my gold, and all that's mine.
Unaskt, most freely would I give him all :
How much more gladly at my father's call !"

And the yet more touching scene of Bharata, following Rama into exile, begging him to return but begging in vain, and content ultimately to place Rama's sandals on the throne until his return from exile. Arjuna, valiant warrior, hero of many a battlefield, shrinking from fighting against near relations and dear friends, laying down his arms on the first day of battle, being recalled to his sense of public duty and recognition of the claims of the greater good ; Bhishma, giving loving advice even to those who fought against him ; Harishchandra sacrificing everything in order that his word of honour might be kept ; Rama saying in his last years, "Affection, compassion, happiness, yea, even Sita herself—in renouncing all these I have not the slightest pain, if thereby I can secure the satisfaction of my subjects ;" these scenes, and inspiring passages like these :

"The person who acquires knowledge, has control over the mind, and is pure in thought and deed, and attains that stage whence he is not born again."

"What is great is bliss. The great is itself bliss. Understanding, thought, faith, conduct, volition, all lead to the ultimate truth."

"Lead me from the unreal to the Real; from darkness take me to Light; from death lead me to Immortality."

"Death, that must come, comes nobly when we give
Our wealth, life, and all, to make men live."

"In good fortune not elated, in ill-fortune not dismayed,
Ever eloquent in council, never in the fight afraid,

Proudly emulous of honour, steadfastly on wisdom set; These six virtues in the nature of a noble soul are met."

"Unable to see others suffering; helpful and forgiving to all beings; one whose strength is truth; without reproach; ever unperturbed; one who has controlled his desires, is mild and pure; one who desires no honours, willing to honour others; one who is friendly to everyone and is moved by compassion; one whose vision is noble—he is indeed the greatest of men."

"Discarding all sense of pride and notion of prestige and idea of physical differences, one should bend before all created beings, down to the dog and the ass."

—And numerous others which can be easily recalled by those who have been nurtured on the Indian classics, episodes, maxims, lyric pieces, produce in one a sense of tranquillity; of incessant and beneficent activity; of one-ness not only with fellow-men, but beasts and birds and flowers, rivers and mountains; of parity and compassion; of balance; and of willing surrender to the will of God.

If we turn to the Greek classics or those of Rome, the final impression is not different from this. Milton's account of the grave tragedians who teach

"Of moral prudence, with delight received,

In brief sententious precepts, while they treat

Of fate, and chance, and change in human life;

High actions and high passions best describing"—

Or Shelley's reference to the Athenian records and fragments stamped so vividly with the image of the divinity in man; or Mill's conviction that the ancient writers provide an admirable foundation for ethical and philosophical culture, or Gilbert Murray's remark that they enshrine moments of living that are too beautiful to be allowed to pass; or another scholar's view that they engender disinterested curiosity which is the real root as it is the real flower of the intellectual life—all these express only a part of the contribution which the Greek and Roman classics have made, only a part of the debt which the civilisation of Europe owes to them. For the chastening of our soul, for its comfort, for its elevation, we have noble words that still stand us in good stead, words that are both memorable in themselves and for the emotions they arouse and the spiritual exaltation that they provide. "No Greek was ever an old man", it was said, and age does not wither their words either. The saying of Archimedes:

"Give me a place to stand and I will move the earth;"

the words of Epictetus:

"He is free who lives as he chooses;"

the statement in Sophocles:

"Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man;"

the epigram in Pindar:

"Man's life is a day. What is he?

What is he not? A shadow in a dream

Is man: but when God sheds a brightness,

Shining light is on earth

And life is sweet as honey;"

Cicero's words:

"A short life is given us by nature, but the memory of a well-spent life is eternal;"

the lines in Virgil:

"Everyone has his allotted day; short and irrecoverable is the lifetime of all; but to extend our fame by deeds—this is the task of greatness"—

These cheer us on our tedious way and lift us if we totter down. The value of moderation is constantly stressed in these classics—the need for temperance, the value of evenness and balance and *sophrosyne*. "Nothing in the affairs of man is

worthy of great anxiety" (Plato); "Remember to preserve an even mind in adverse circumstances, and equally in good fortune a mind free from insolent joy" (Horace); "An undisturbed mind is the best sauce for affliction" (Plautus); "The passions of the mind should be neither overclated nor abjectly depressed" (Cicero); "It is great riches to a man to live sparingly with an open mind" (Lucretius); "Whatever you love, desire that it may not please you too much" (Martial); "Things that are moderate last a long while" (Seneca); "To keep to moderation, to hold the end in view, to follow the rules of nature" (Lucanus)—do these not also echo the cardinal truth enunciated in the Bhagwadgita :

"In sorrow not dejected, and in joys
Not overjoyed; dwelling outside the stress
Of passion, fear, and anger"

or in Fariduddin Attar :

"Whoever knows how to control his passions will be among those who have secured freedom in this world."

These classics set up before us ideals and suggest heights to which we may aspire. "Barbarism" has been well defined as the absence of standards to which appeal can be made.

And in the classics of Persia too, we find similar sustaining and elevating power. In the odes, elegies, moral maxims, narrative poems, discourses, and anecdotes, there is food for thought, advice clothed in attractive garb, deep philosophy underlying the symbolism of love and wine, mystic vision in the writings of the budge doctors of the Sufistic fur, useful and noble sentiments. These there are in plenty, even though on the surface the writers may seem to have lost themselves completely in wine and flowers, the running stream and the face beloved. The superficial reader will take delight in the rapturous nightingale wooing the rose, the cup that holds the drink divine, the golden sunshine of the human face, a book of rose-leaves smelling all of wine, Samarcand and Bokhara gifted away in exchange for the mole upon the cheek. But one can find wisdom too: how the personal self can be merged in the consciousness of the Divine; how by abandoning yourself to become one of the poor you can be admitted into the palace of Eternity; how the poor are the treasures of this world and the keys of the other; how "generation goeth and generation cometh, while for ever the earth abideth. The sun riseth also and the sun goeth down and cometh panting back to his place where he riseth."

With an authority which I cannot attain, Matthew Arnold says: "Commerce with the ancients appears to me to produce, in those who constantly practise it, a steady and composing effect upon their judgment, not in literary works only, but of men and events in general. They are like persons who have had a very weighty and impressive experience; they are more truly than others under the empire of facts, and more independent of the language current among those with whom they live. They wish neither to applaud nor to revile their age; they wish to know what it is, what it can give them, and whether this is what they want." My message is:—Back to the classics—Treasure up the best part of the past. It enshrines that which shapes our inner life, contributes to our emotion, imagination, and thought, is the content of national consciousness, and endows us with charity and freedom from bitterness.

Benares Hindu University Convocation

The following are extracts from the Convocation Address delivered by the Hon'ble *Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru*, LL. D. at Benares on November 28, 1943:—

We are living in stirring times. The world is calling for men of action and daring. Change is in the air. We do not know what will come out of the present titanic struggle, but it has made people in all countries eager for a radical transformation of the existing order, which seems to have had its day. The old order has not yet yielded place to the new anywhere, but one hopes that the struggles and sacrifices of the last four years are the birth-throes of the new world for which we are longing. It is natural that we should ask, at a time like this, what will be our place in the new order and what will be our contribution to it. The problem of India cannot be isolated from that of the rest of the world. Indeed, it is part of the world problem. The political and social ills that we complain

of have cast their blight on the lives of millions in other countries. The longing for bold advance and experimentation in the hearts of us all reflects the expectant mood of the entire world. The denial of human freedom, and the existence of poverty side by side with enormous potential wealth are the fundamental problems facing the entire world. The existing social system is being hotly questioned everywhere, and men are asking themselves why they should stand by silently while the things to satisfy them are within easy reach. And any solution which is based on the application of social values to human problems will be as applicable to India as to any other country. It depends on those in authority today whether peace and plenty should reign through the world in future, or the unrest and denial of equality and brotherhood, which are responsible for the present holocaust, will continue. "The test in the world today," as Mr. Wendell Willkie has said, "is as to whether political leadership, business leadership and labour leadership have the quality and the capacity and the character to measure up to these critical times." The temper of the people shows that they will not allow the *status quo* to exist.

The universities and centres of learning have an important part to play in bringing about the transformation, which we all ardently desire. They can afford valuable guidance in the shaping of new policies and the formulation of schemes to implement them. In view of the great service which the universities can render in the years to come, it will be appropriate if I refer first to the problem of educational reconstruction, which has been completely and persistently ignored by those who had the power and responsibility to solve it.

It may seem unreal to discuss educational questions while we are in the midst of a world war, but, in reality, the importance of making far-reaching changes in the existing educational system to increase the vigour and efficiency of the people has been thrown into sharp relief in all free countries by the events of the last four years. The knowledge that the ability of a country to preserve its national life and to maintain its position in relation to other countries depends on the intelligence and capacity of its individual citizens has stimulated interest in educational problems both in England and America and educational expenditure is regarded by these countries as a part of the national war effort. They are not merely preparing plans for the further development of their educational system after the war, but are already incurring additional expenditure to improve it in all directions. England, in spite of the burden which it has to bear on account of the war, has raised its educational budget from £105 millions to £172 millions in the current financial year, in order to enable it to hold its own in the post-war world : it has increased its educational expenditure by 70% since the outbreak of the war. Turkey, I understand, spends more on education than it does on armaments or its standing army. Even China, which has been engaged in a life and death struggle with Japan for more than six years, has found it possible to give education the highest place in its national budget next to war expenditure. Realizing that their future position will depend more largely than ever before on their understanding of the forces that will shape the new world, the Chinese are taking comprehensive measures to enhance the capacity of their people to adjust themselves intelligently to their environment. In these circumstances, we can postpone the consideration of our educational future only at our peril. We have a heavy task before us. We have not merely to introduce the light of education into every home, but also to enable our people to occupy a position of intellectual equality with other nations. We have to take steps at one and the same time to cover the country with a network of educational institutions and to raise them to a standard comparable with that of similar institutions in the more advanced countries.

Every one of us, I am sure, realizes the need for equipping the people with the weapon of knowledge to ensure their survival in the keen struggle for existence that will arise after the war ; but our educational system cannot be easily adapted to our requirements. Education has scarcely ever been viewed as a whole in this country. It has developed haphazardly under the pressure of events. It is soulless in the sense that it is inspired by no ideal. Its aim is neither the individual good in the highest sense of the term, nor rational greatness. There is no dynamic purpose behind it. It is designed to maintain the *status quo*. Its hall-mark is, therefore, conformity to the existing political order, which requires subservience to authority and places a premium on the production of men qualified to fill subordinate roles. We have, therefore, to view our educational problem from a new standpoint, and to devise a system which will provide for the rearing up of a race of free men.

In examining our educational structure, let us first consider University education, which will interest us most on the present occasion. The number of students in the universities has often been regarded as excessive. It came in for a great deal of criticism during the years of depression. Relatively to the total population, the number is not too large. Before the war, the proportion of students in the universities to the entire population was 1 to 837 in Great Britain, 1 to 690 in Germany and 1 to 225 in the United States, but in India it is only 1 to 2,430. The number of University students cannot, therefore, be regarded as excessive, but the poor quality of University education and the inability of the graduates to support themselves require serious consideration. Both the standard of education and the methods of teaching require revision.

A high educational authority thinks that "only 30 per cent. of the University products can be said to have secured employment of a type which is in keeping with their attainments or commensurate with the time and money which have been spent on their education." This tragic misdirection of energy can be remedied only by a reorganization of the entire educational system, so that its various parts will be properly adjusted to one another and more account will be taken of the different aptitudes of the students and the practical needs of the community. The vocational side of education which has been largely neglected will have to receive much greater attention than it has unfortunately received so far. It is only then that the pressure on institutions which make provision for general education will be relieved. If our universities are to be comparable to the universities of the more advanced countries, an essential feature of university reform must be the extension of the degree course to three years. Steps must be taken at the same time to improve the quality of the material that the universities get from the high schools by the addition of a year to the high school course. This will naturally lead to the elimination of the intermediate classes, which are an anomalous feature of our educational system at the present time. Education will thus be divided into two well-marked stages, each of which will be a complete whole. Simultaneously with the attempts to improve education, generous provision must be made for scholarships which will be sufficient to support those whose means do not allow them to prolong their education. The scholarships at present given are unfortunately too small to enable those who receive them to maintain themselves and to take part on a footing of equality with other students in the social life of their colleges and universities. This means that, in the case of a fairly large proportion of the students, maintenance grants should take the place of scholarships. The reports of the University Grant Commission in England show that nearly half the University students are able to carry on their education only because of the financial help which they receive from public or private funds. In order to raise the standard of secondary education adequately—and make it a suitable foundation for higher studies, the importance of the mother tongue must be recognized much more fully than is the case at present.

"The mother-tongue," observed the Calcutta University Commission, "is the true vehicle of mother-wit. Another medium of speech may bring with it, as English brings with it, a current of new ideas. But the mother-tongue is one with the air in which a man is born.... It is the mother-tongue which gives to the adult mind the relief and illumination of utterance, as it clutches after the aid of words when new ideas or judgments spring from the wordless recesses of thought or feeling under the stimulus of physical experience or of emotion. Hence, in all education, the primary place should be given to training in the exact and free use of the mother-tongue." In many provinces, subjects other than English can be taught through the mother-tongue, but training in the use of the mother-tongue does not still occupy, as the Commission desired, "a fundamental and unique place" in our educational system.

The developments suggested above must be accompanied by a wide expansion of primary education, which has hitherto been woefully neglected. Our future will depend, not on the selected few who have enjoyed the advantages of higher education, but on the ability of the common man to understand the world he lives in and the position which he occupies in it. Free and compulsory education is, therefore, as necessary here as it is elsewhere. Had the efforts made by Mr. Gokhale thirty years ago to make a beginning in the direction of free and compulsory education succeeded, and the authorities realized that it was their primary duty to spread education not merely in urban, but also in rural areas, we would have gone much further on the road to universal education than we have unfortunately done so far. Our backwardness requires that we should make strenuous endeavours to

achieve as rapid a progress as is practicable, so that we may not be left behind in the race of life.

I have here attempted only a brief indication of some of the points on which reform is called for; the Education Adviser to the Government of India has recently put forward a comprehensive scheme which deserves the immediate attention of the country. The reforms here advocated will undoubtedly be costly. He has calculated that it would cost about 277 crores to provide India with a system of education comparable to that prevailing in the West *before* the war. The figure may stagger even the most ardent advocate of education reform in this country, but the examples of other countries should inspire us with a determination to do all that lies in our power to wipe out the ignorance which has long been a reproach to the country. I have already stated what Turkey and China are doing to educate their people. The example of Russia which has won the admiration of the whole world by its heroism in defending its freedom should be an even greater inspiration. It is poor and has a large population, 90 per cent of which was illiterate before the Revolution of 1917, but it has abolished illiteracy. In our own country, money has been found for the War to an extent which would have seemed impossible only four years ago. If we realize that national education is as necessary to our existence as victory in the war, we would consider no sacrifice too great in order to develop our human capital which is of far greater importance than silver and gold. We can neither industrialize the country nor banish poverty and ill-health which are the results of ignorance and illiteracy unless our people are equipped with the knowledge which modern conditions require. Educational progress is an essential preliminary to progress in other directions. Our future is indissolubly bound up with it. The spread of education and its development in all its branches must be the first reform that we should insist on after the war. Nothing is worth having without it. The main responsibility for carrying out this reform must rest on the Government of India. In the present circumstances its achievement will be impossible if it is left entirely to the provinces.

I have dwelt at length on the urgent need for the diffusion of education throughout the country, because the successful working of democracy depends on an educated electorate. The political responsibilities which a democratic system of government places on their shoulders can be discharged by the people only when they can arrive at an intelligent decision with regard to the important issues that arise from time to time. Nor can the economic condition of the country be improved to the full extent possible while the masses are stupid in ignorance. Both the industrialization of the country and the efficiency of agriculture require educated cultivators and workers who will be able to understand the significance of the results achieved by science to human life and be able to apply them in practice.

Education is thus the indispensable basis of all schemes for improving the general conditions under which the people live, but the extension of the social services cannot be postponed till education has been placed within reach of every boy and girl. A great deal can be done even now to mitigate poverty and disease. The poverty of the country is too well-known to require emphasis. Millions live on the verge of starvation and millions more never know what it is to have a full meal. Inadequate nourishment inevitably leads to ill-health and premature death. The incidence of disease is higher in India than in any country with which we would like to compare ourselves, and the low expectation of life here is in startling contrast with that in England, the United States and other advanced countries. While the average age is 59.12 years in the U.S.A., 58.74 in England and Wales and 44.82 in Japan, in India it is only 26.91. The catastrophe which has overwhelmed Bengal points to the urgent need for taking vigorous steps to deal with problems of social reconstruction. The shortage of food and the epidemics of malaria, dysentery, cholera, etc., and the terrible increase in mortality which have followed in its wake are now the results of a temporary dislocation of the economic machinery. They point to a serious deficiency in our social system and the lessons which they teach should be taken to heart both by the Government and the public. They show that the standard of living in the country is dangerously low. As I have already stated, there is a chronic shortage of food in the country. Want of bodily vigour characterizes the large majority of the population, and agricultural and industrial production compares very unfavourably with that in the countries to which I have already referred. We have become used to starvation, inefficiency and disease, and have regarded them as the inevitable features of life in a country with so large a population. We have become callous to human suffering and have taken hardly any steps to plan an economy which would give a chance of leading a

happy, healthy and prosperous life to those who are living under sub-human conditions. The famine that is raging in Bengal and other parts of India draws forcible attention to the urgent need for adopting measures to bring about social security. We need a Beveridge Plan which would lay down a national minimum which we must strive to achieve as early as possible. The tragedy of Bengal should serve as a clarion call to our educated countrymen to work for the welfare of the masses. A Persian poet has said : "The more I studied logic and philosophy, the more I felt that their meaning was only love." The education which we have received should teach us the duty of service and sacrifice. In a recent speech defining the duty of the British Government to its own people, Mr. Churchill said : "Now I regard it as a definite part of the duty and responsibility of this National Government to have to set about a vast and practical scheme to make sure that, in the years immediately following the war, there will be food, work and home for all. No erudition, no party doctrines or party prejudices or vested interests shall stand in the way of the simple duty of providing before the end of the war for food, work and home. Each plan must be prepared *now*, during the war, and they must come into action as soon as victory is won." Our objective must be the same. We have no government which we can call national, yet our duty to spend ourselves in the service of the country and to fight for conditions in which there will be "food, work and home for all" is imperative.

The times in which we live are difficult. We are faced with baffling problems. In spite of the sacrifices we have made in this war for the cause of human freedom, we have yet been given no share in the freedom for which we are fighting. Though the promise of freedom is still held out to us, a new slogan has been raised by our opponents to delay its achievement. We are now told that democracy is unsuitable to India. Our special differences are held to militate against the establishment of a democratic government. We are expected to follow England in every respect except its system of government. When it is discovered that democracy cannot be worked in India, we do not know. But the new obstacle placed in our way should only serve as a further challenge to the spirit of youth. The present situation may try their patience, but patriotism requires that they should bend every particle of their energy to the task of welding their country into a united whole. With faith in themselves, they should work for the elimination of all those distinctions of caste and creed which have brought about discord among us and divided those who should love one another as brothers. The impediments in their way are formidable. But they must remember that we are not the only people who have to contend against heavy odds. China is passing through a severe ordeal. The war has brought untold sufferings on its people, and it has been ravished by a ruthless enemy, who has tried every means in his power to destroy its national life, but the spirit of the youth of China is still unbroken. They have answered the call of their country with magnificent courage and enthusiasm. Till a few years ago, China was torn by internecine divisions. There was not even a semblance of unity in the country. Practically every province regarded itself as more or less independent and had its own war lord, but China enjoys a moral unity today which would have been regarded as impossible a few years ago. This achievement is in no small measure due to the unconquerable patriotism and self-sacrificing labours of the young men and women of China. To the young men and women of India I would say : "You have no government of your own as China had to help you in going forward, but you have within you the same spirit which has actuated the Chinese youth to work and suffer for the country.

If you do not lose heart, the vigorous struggle in which we are engaged will have but one end. But be true to yourselves, and the battle of freedom, though at times it may seem lost, can only end in our Victory. Yours is now the great opportunity to work and perhaps to suffer for the achievement of this supreme end !"

The Nagpur University Convocation

The following are extracts from the Convocation Address delivered by *Sir Homi Mody* at Nagpur on Monday, the 13th. December 1943 :—

Slowly but with gathering force, the armed might of the Democracies is asserting itself, and even before the smoke of battle has cleared away, men's thoughts

are turning to the building of a better world from which injustice, oppression and cruelty may for ever be banished. You have the good fortune to be the standard bearers of this New Age and what more inspiring call can you have than that you equip yourself adequately for the great tasks which await you? In the forefront, you must have a clear appreciation of the fundamentals of the issue over which the present conflict is raging. *Lord Halifax*, in a memorable address delivered at Oxford some three years ago, pointed out that real conflict today was not between age and youth, but between youth and youth. He thought it was a terrifying challenge to the very foundations of human thought and action that the growing generations in different countries should accept standards of conduct in sharp contradiction to an another. The devastating perversion of the youth of Germany and her satellites had brought about a moral retrogression, and it was a question of fighting for the very existence of modern civilization. *Lord Halifax* pleaded for a repudiation of the crudely materialistic philosophy of *Hitler's Germany*, and the return to social, moral and religious standards.

The task which faces humanity of evolving a better social and political order is one of infinite complexity, and requires us all to shed some of our most cherished convictions and unlearn some of the dogmas on which we have been reared. The cry of Freedom is on every one's lips but is it not clear that the concept of Freedom needs to be revised and given a new and deeper meaning? For us in India, the problem is complicated by the special conditions of our political life. Our entire concentration on the attainment of Self-Government has necessarily created a somewhat narrow national outlook, and to the extent that Freedom must be our first objective, there is no reason to quarrel with it. If, however, the two world wars have taught us any lesson, it is that there is no hope for mankind in a world divided up into sovereign states, pursuing their own ends, and refusing to think in terms of an international Order, capable of guaranteeing a collective political and economic security. The practical recognition of this truth must obviously be the first task of the statesmen of the United Nations. In the present evolution of India, the problem may appear to be one of academic interest, but however distant or near the attainment of our goal may be, the leaders of political thought in the country cannot afford to mark time while the rest of the world is engaged in working out a solution. One of these days, India is bound to take her rightful place in the Councils of the world, and it is essential that those who are moulding her destinies should have their minds attuned in time to the revolutionary changes that are taking place in the ideology of freedom-loving peoples all over the earth.

Another lesson which this War has taught us is that Democracy, however much we may prize it, is not necessarily the last word in political wisdom, and that human progress can be achieved under widely different systems. Soldier and civilian are fighting in Russia with a heroism and resourcefulness which have compelled the admiration of the world, and it cannot but be admitted that Russian resistance has given a rude shock to the almost universal conception of the Soviet System of Government. To-day it is heresy to talk of an international Order without Russian collaboration. Incidentally, the course of history would have been different, if the realization of Russia's place in world polity had dawned on the Great Democracies a few years earlier. Putting the idea in another way, the war has taught us that peace-loving nations can collaborate with one another under widely different systems of Government, and that man does not need a political system any more than he needs a universal religion.

It is a remarkable circumstance that almost from the very beginning of our struggle for emancipation, we have owned allegiance to the ideal of Parliamentary Democracy. Since it has become an article of faith with us, it is useful to remember that the British Constitution has only been made possible by the peculiar genius of the British people, developed over a course of centuries and has not been found capable of adoption by any other nation. However that may be, we must have clear understanding of the essentials of Democracy. It is a commonplace that under a democratic form of Government, the individual enjoys the largest measure of freedom compatible with the existence of an ordered Society functioning for the common good. It is a condition of the system that the will of the individual, collectively expressed, largely determines the character and composition of the Government in power. The subordination of the citizen to the State, and the rigid regimentation which follows from it under a dictatorship whether of the individual or the Proletariat, is abhorrent to the ideals of Democracy. This concept of the place of the individual has elevated humanity, but it is be-

coming increasingly clear that it is no longer adequate, and by itself cannot satisfy man in his craving for a larger and fuller existence. Economic freedom must form an equally essential part of the common heritage; the new life which man wants must offer security as well as freedom. This may mean the abandonment of the extreme forms of the *laissez-faire* doctrine which the Nineteenth Century elevated to the position of a gospel. There are many who might interpret this as the beginning of the process of dissolution of Capitalism. I have no such fears. I believe our economic life can and will adjust itself to the needs of the times and the demands of a more enlightened humanity. It should be quite possible to remodel the capitalist organization of Industry without destroying individual initiative and the profit motive. Here again clear thinking is required, and the solution must be along the lines of a compromise between two extreme sets of ideas. The relations between Capital and Labour will also need to be adjusted, if the disastrous antagonism between them is to be prevented from developing into a threat to the fabric of Society. I do not see why it should not be possible to develop a synthesis of interests in which an adequate and honourable place is found for both Capital and Labour. When our economic system has thus shed some of its old clothes and put on new habiliments, we may expect political freedom and freedom from want to be knit together in close alliance in the common interests of all.

There is another Freedom, of which we have heard very little at any of the Conferences which the statesmen and strategists of the United Nations have been holding from time to time. I mean the freedom of the Coloured People. If, as the Big Three have very recently stated at Teheran, the peace which they envisage will be one "which will command the goodwill of the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge of the terror of war for many generations," there can be no place in it for the Colour Bar. There cannot be a world divided up into four different compartments labelled, White, Brown, Yellow and Black. Global peace cannot rest on the insecure foundations of racial inequality.

Apart from this wider conception of freedom, if India's political evolution is to be on the lines of a Parliamentary democracy, we have to try and appreciate the conditions which make for success. Tolerance and discipline are the very foundations of the system, and as I have indicated above, it is their continual exercise that has accounted for the strength of British institutions. India will need to cultivate these special attributes, and that leads me on to the consideration of an unpleasant feature in the corporate life of our schools and colleges. No man interested in the development of the character of the rising generation can remain indifferent to the growing manifestations of indiscipline in our institutions of learning. It is a problem which has to be handled with tact and understanding, and in so far as your system of education or upbringing may be held to be responsible, all who have in their hands the moulding of the character of the youth of the country in their hands must seriously concern themselves with eradicating the root causes of the trouble. I have no desire to moralize; my only purpose is to point out that if discipline is not implanted early in life, the younger generation which will have enormous responsibilities laid on its shoulders, will find itself faced with difficulties threatening the orderly development of free institutions in this country.

Allied to this is the old, old question whether it is right for students to engage themselves in political controversy. If I was seeking for perfection in an imperfect world, I would positively deprecate their active participation in politics, particularly as it must mean, under present-day conditions, concentration on the single issue of political freedom. I recognize, however, the impossibility of altogether weaning away the young mind from issues which fill such an important place in the lives of all, and I shall forbear from advice which has often been tendered, and as often rejected. Only one thing I would emphasise, and it is that there is only one period in which you can cultivate and enrich your minds, and it would be a thousand pities if at the most formative stage in your lives, you allowed yourselves to stray along the barren paths of politics, which to most of us mean only disappointment and frustration.

Before I leave the subject of political freedom with which I have dealt mainly in the abstract, I would like to say a few words about what is one of the most potent agencies for the efficient prosecution of the democratic way of life. I refer to the power of the Press. We all know there is no such thing as a free press in countries which are subject to the will of an individual or a group, but I wonder how many of us realize the tendencies which have been at work, even in liberty

loving countries, during the past generation or two. Time was when there were newspapers in Great Britain which made and unmade governments. They stood out as protagonists, not of this class or that, one special interest or another, but as champions of freedom and fair dealing between man and man. They influenced the policy of Government, moulded public opinion, and stood as buffers between the electorate and the party machine. Their fearless voices were heard with respect in the chancellories of the world. The arrival of the Press Barons on the scene has changed all that, and has left the electorate at the mercy of the party machine. The sorry chapter of incompetence, indecision and expediency which characterized British policy during the disastrous years which preceded the rise to power of political gangsters would not have been written if a really free press had been functioning in Great Britain. With the growing power of the political machine, and with a press largely subservient to capitalist interests, the party in power was able to keep the nation in blinkers, and men like Mr. Churchill who were trying to rouse it to a consciousness of the humiliation of its position and the peril it was facing, could get no hearing. This has an object lesson for us all. The press has to be protected against party domination just as much as against control by the Government in power, and if conditions are ever created here which make it impossible for even a few fearless men to raise their voice against oppression, injustice or back-sliding, democracy in this country will lose one of its greatest safeguards.

I have dealt so far with problems which insistently call for a solution, if the world of tomorrow is to be a better and happier place to live in. I believe this may prove to be the last chance civilization has of retrieving itself; I cannot imagine its surviving another war. A heavy responsibility rests accordingly on the shoulders of those to whom is committed the task of putting the world back on its feet. Let us profoundly hope we shall be spared another Versailles, and that men of strong purpose and clear minds will guide humanity's footsteps. Is it not a tragedy that at such a decisive period of history, our country should find itself torn by dissensions and unable to reach the goal which all sections of the people have set before themselves? I do not think it appropriate to the occasion that I should dwell on controversial issues, and if I refer to the communal problem, it is only for the purpose of emphasising that there can be no future for the country unless the various races and communities within its borders learn to live together. The achievement of that objective will have to be the supreme responsibility of the young men and women who have received the impress of a University education, and who have learnt to value the virtues of toleration and a broad outlook on life. It is a task which calls for infinite patience and understanding. If it is true that the fragmentation of India would seriously jeopardize her prospects of emergence some day as one of the Great Powers, it is equally true that no political framework which was unacceptable to any large section of the population would have a chance of being set up or maintained. Harmony between the various races which inhabit this geographical unit, known for centuries as Hindustan, thus becomes the most compelling task before us all. I hope the youth of the country will apply themselves to it with evangelic fervour, conscious as they are of the injury done to the interests of the country by the eternal wrangles of the politicians of the day, and imbued as they must be with the lessons of the two ghastliest wars in all history. The road is long and difficult, there may be many wrong turnings and the goal may elude them, but success must crown the efforts of those who preserve their faith undimmed and refuse to own defeat.

The Punjab University Convocation

The following are extracts from the address delivered by the right reverend G. D. Barne, C.I.E., O.B.E., M.A., D.D., V.D., Bishop of Lahore at the Annual Convocation of the Punjab University held at Lahore on December 22nd, 1943 :—

"A University aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles of popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power and refining the intercourse of private life."

Ladies and gentlemen graduates, there is much meat in this definition. I do not pretend it is complete or perfect, but it will be enough for us this morning.

May I invite your consideration of some thoughts which surge through my mind when I ponder this definition in the light of the days in which we live and with special reference to this great land of India in which I have spent more than half my life.

Towards the end of last century Matthew Arnold reminded us in England who read his poetry that we were "wandering between two worlds, one dead, one powerless to be born." The words are much more applicable now sixty years later than they were when they were written. The events of the last four years have completed the shattering of the old world which was beginning at the end of last century and was speeded up by the first Great War. Now the old world is indubitably dead. We stand on the threshold of a new era. We are not only spectators of a new birth but we are participants in it and this especially applies to you of the younger generation ; not to us who have nearly completed our course, but to you, representatives of the intelligentsia of all nations, you who represent millions of young men and women in the two hemispheres, many of whom to-day have been ruthlessly murdered in a diabolical attempt to stamp out individual personality and culture and degrade men and women by turning them into machines. You in India to-day can still say "my mind to me a kingdom is", but you do not share that privileged position with all your brothers and sisters. We have peace this morning in Lahore, a greater peace than Calcutta where enemy bombs have recently taken their toll of life. Elsewhere in many a University there has been no peace for four years. Murder and destruction reign supreme.

I have not the time to enlarge upon every phrase in the definition of a University which I have just quoted to you, though I commend it all to your notice. I must be content to take some of it only.

A University aims firstly at *cultivating the public mind and purifying the national taste.*

Secondly at *supplying true principles to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power.*

You will remember I am suggesting to you that, whatever profession you are going to follow, your University requires of you that, in return for her learning and culture, you have an unending duty to society, to those, the vast majority, who go through life without the support which letters after their names should secure.

PUBLIC MIND, NATIONAL TASTE

Firstly, you are expected to play your part at *cultivating the public mind and purifying the national taste.*

I cannot help acknowledging that this gigantic task you share with all countries of the present day. I am not thinking of India alone. I am not thinking only of the Punjab. Public minds and national tastes are, all the world over, at a pretty low level. It is true that they have of recent years been subjected to new influences which are capable of good and of evil on an unprecedented scale, never experienced by the world before. The most potent of these are the cinema and the radio : and we must take account of the immense and growing influence of printed matter. University men and women all the world over carry the responsibility which learning and culture demands. The cinema in India is still in the earlier stages of its development. In some ways it has avoided the less reputable features of Hollywood : in some ways it has been too slavish in following suit. Often it deals with great themes which are inspiring and uplifting : sometimes it does not play so worthy a part. The cinema all the world over must cater for the public taste if it is adequately to fill its halls. Its influence is (to use one of its own hyperbolic adjectives) stupendous. Increasing numbers of people patronise the cinema. It is therefore all the more important that the public mind and national taste should be purified and not degraded. Here is a great influence waiting to be harnessed for good ends. University men and women should be interested in it. Their influence should be to keep it at a high level not only insisting on technical perfection but the presentation of stories and themes which, even in their excitements and developments, raise the national taste instead of degrading it. The same problem presents itself in the radio. Here the level is unquestionably higher but strenuous efforts must be made in all countries to see that the electric wave lengths which Marconi discovered and his successors have improved upon shall not be used for unworthy ends, especially to prostitute the truth. The use of the word propaganda shows as well as anything the most deliberate deception for unworthy ends. The word itself is an admirable word, free from ignoble associations. One of the

Christian societies with which I am connected uses it as a title for proclaiming what it holds to be truth. But nowadays distortion of the truth and lying on a gigantic scale have claimed the word and bound it in fetters from which I doubt if it will ever have the power to free itself. Propaganda is now an utterly sinister word : it carries a message which is suspect. Its name will be for ever connected with Goebbels and those in all countries who have been blind imitators of this apostle of lies. And propaganda is especially connected with the air. Caliban's description of Prospero's island is true of India as of every country in the world—"the isle is full of noises." It would be a good thing for the world if the rest of the description rang true also, "sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not." Truth was of Plato's three Absolutes with Beauty and Goodness. Two thousand five hundred years have done nothing to displace the claims of the great Greek philosopher in the minds of all thinking men everywhere, but all three Absolutes are in jeopardy to-day. Truth lies at the bottom of an abyss where the nations of the world have thrown her. It will be for thinking men and women, especially those who have been kissed by an *Alma Mater* of learning, to rescue her and restore her to her rightful place. "Great is truth and she will prevail" is an estimate we have every right to accept but the debunking of lies and bad faith and the restoration of truth of her rightful place in the "windy ways of men" will require the active co-operation of all educated men. It will be a crusade. Every University in the world should flock to the colours and break a lance for truth.

Then there is the matter of public taste in literature, and all printed matter. There are more books and magazines printed nowadays than ever before. I think the East shares with the West the reflection that much of it is on a low level. In books there is low-brow and high-brow literature. I am not suggesting that University men and women should confine themselves only to high-brow literature. That would be too appalling a prospect. I myself should miss the detective novel very much. There is however good and bad low-brow literature, and middle-brow literature as well. We may be right in assuming that there is no bad high-brow literature. We are all of us consumers of literature. Some of you may be going to be writers. I don't know what you have been reading during your University days outside your subjects. Sir *David Livingstone* in a recent book entitled *Education for a World Adrift* deplores the taste of present day undergraduates at Oxford but lays much of the blame on authorship. Standing up for Victorian literature against present day writers he suggests that Shaw, Huxley and Wells, out a poor figure beside Carlyle, Ruskin, Stevenson, Froude. There are many of you who would not agree with this estimate. Possibly your own Indian writers are of a better calibre than they were half a century or so ago. What a man reads in his leisure time, apart from what he has to read for examinations, is really the touchstone of taste. I feel University men or women are to a greater extent than they some time appreciate trustees of public taste and can help and influence others in what they read or in what they submit to from the writers of leaders in the papers.

The second phrase I would take from the definition of a University which I have chosen is—a University aims at supplying true principles to popular aspirations, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power.

PRINCIPLES, IDEAS, POLITICAL POWER.

Surely there is enough in these words to engage the thoughts of those who, in their University days apart from their studies, have devoted no small attention to political issues and felt with all the fire and enthusiasm of youth the urge at playing their part in working for the full and unrestricted freedom of their country. I have often heard it said that the main hobby of Indian University students is politics. If the description is true it would not be surprising because the political issues of this great sub-continent contain some of the most interesting and challenging problems in the world. It would be as surprising as it would be disappointing if the students of Indian Universities were not interested in them. One of the main functions of a University is to provide a forum for exchange of thoughts : a series of cells where opinions are germinated and discussed. India has not yet realised sufficiently this most vital facet of University life. Too often Universities are examining bodies, degree-giving institutions. Many an undergraduate passes through them without the rapier thrust and parry of intellectual discussion and stimulating thought. A University is a half-way house for one who is later going

to contribute to the life and development of his country. The Principal of Hertford College, Oxford expressed this well a few years ago. "A University, if it is worthy of the name, should be a melting pot of opinions, a great dialectical workshop of character, in which the young are eagerly testing every spirit, without having reached for the most part conclusions which an older man can sum up categorically, without grave risk of interpretation." Well, ladies and gentlemen, you have been through your testing time. You are about to start on that journey which should land you eventually among the elders for whose judgment the Principal of Hertford obviously entertains a high opinion, in spite of the strictures which the younger generation pass so easily—and perhaps justifiably (let us ancients accept our medicine) on those who are old. I think you of the younger generation are fortunate in the time you have struck the wheel of history. It is a difficult but challenging time. I hope many of you share Wordsworth's reflection when he contemplated the French Revolution some one hundred and fifty years ago, "Bliss was it in that day to be alive, but to be young was very heaven." But youth, because of its enthusiasms, does need the strengthening of discipline in thought and action. I hope you can look back over your University days and on to your future career with something of the poet's estimate of past and future.

"I am a part of all that I have met,
Yet all experience is an arch where thro'
Gleams that untraveller'd road whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move."

The future is ever elusive. Enlargement and sobriety, dull sounding companions, will be yours as time recedes. I think you will find that they will improve on better acquaintance, though it will be a sign that you too are growing old.

Our definition refers to *true principles of popular aspiration*. I do not think that these principles are any different really in India than elsewhere. One thing is certain, the world is in a ferment. Popular aspiration all the world over is subject to changing moods. It is something like Vergil's *mutabile semper femina*, though the Roman poet's criticism on the weathercock of womanhood would find less supporters to-day. Some points in popular aspiration however seem fixed and almost ineluctable, for instance the general tendency of mankind towards freedom and democratic ideals. That degrading theory of autocratic and arbitrary authority which we connect with Hitler's Germany is not the way the wind of human life is blowing. *Homo sapiens* is demanding more and more freedom, pure and unswayed, which will make possible the full development of personality and individual character which will guarantee the progress of nations towards the fullest life. In India the wind of freedom blows strong. During a long residence in this country I have noticed how a breeze has developed into a strong wind and a strong wind into a gale. It will be for you University men and women to take a hand in piloting your ship of state through the waves which this gale has itself produced. You know your own seas infinitely better than any mariners from the West know them, though sometimes, with a longer experience in oceans and currents, some pilots from the West have made charts and built light-houses which it would be unwise to refuse to notice. I am sure all those I address to-day are good nationalists. No one of the rising generation in India to-day would be worth his salt unless he was. Our definition of a University includes the words *facilitating the exercise of political power*. It presupposes that university men and women will do their best to make the political engine run smoothly and even increase the mileage of the track, the metallised lines on which the train is constantly moving. It presupposes also, I suggest, that the best way for a train to reach its destination, is to keep on the lines. Even if we are not railway engineers we know that leaving the lines for fields or woods means disaster, not progress. It presupposes that doctors, teachers, and the rest, will be active and sleeping partners, not soulless cogs in the machine of life. There are national and civic duties not only for you yourself individually, but the position to which your education has brought you should make you concerned about millions more, the poor and outcaste people, who should be showing signs of progress as well.

The Delhi University Convocation

The following are extract from the Address delivered by *Sir Maurice Gwyer*, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.C.L., LL.D., Vice-Chancellor at the twenty-first Convocation held at Delhi on December 22nd 1943 :—

With your leave, therefore, I do not propose this afternoon to say much about education in general, though I must say something about the particular aspect of it with which the University of Delhi is concerned. But first and foremost it is my agreeable duty to congratulate all those young men who have degrees conferred on them today and to express on behalf of the University our apologies that some of them should have had to wait so long for it. That particular delay will not, I hope, occur again ; and now that this period of transition and reorganization is coming to an end it is our intention to hold the University Convocation each year in or about the month of November, which seems to be generally accepted as the most convenient time ; and in that case those whose examination results are declared in May and June will not have to wait as hitherto before the crowning of their labours. These new graduates of the University are going out into the world at a very critical time in the history of their country, and, if I may compare small with great, in the history of their University itself. The training which they have received here will perhaps have fitted them to play their part more effectively on wider stage of public life ; and they may reflect later on, if they are of a philosophic turn of mind, that the path from the old to the new which their country is now treading has not been without its counter-part in the lesser world of the University during their period of residence here. They will have seen that a fruitful co-operation is not inconsistent with autonomy, and that central guidance produces greater results through persuasion than through force ; and, above all, that it is the vital spark within that animates any institution which is the work of men's hands, no matter how elaborate and ingenious is the construction of its frame-work and external fabric.

Wise men have long discussed the question whether there is such a thing as the corporate will of any body of men as distinct from the individual wills of those of whom the body is composed. I think that it would have been difficult not so very long ago to discern any corporate will in this University. The Colleges no doubt had their independent life and corporate existence ; but the University was no more than the sum of the Colleges and lacked any corporate will or indeed any existence of its own. I hope and believe that the rebirth of the University, for so I think with justice it may be described, has been beneficial to all concerned. The Colleges are stronger because they are now an integral and essential element in a wider unity ; and they not only possess their own inner strength but are able to draw strength also from their sister Colleges and from the University itself. The University in its turn has developed a corporate life of its own, but it shares it with them.

No one, I think, now believes that there has been any desire to exalt the University at the expense of the Colleges. As an Oxford man myself, I should repudiate any policy which affected the status of the Colleges or detracted from their rightful position in the University. But an appreciation of the part which the Colleges must play in the development of the University must not close our eyes to the necessity of improving also the status of the University itself. The University has its own special functions, just as the colleges have theirs. There is room for both, and by union and co-operation they will be able to achieve things out of the power of either working independently and apart. This, I think, is now generally recognized ; and I can myself detect at the present moment not even a latent antagonism between the different elements of which the University is composed. The first complete experiment in co-operative teaching, in the post-graduate teaching of Economics, has been by general consent a great success ; and I hope that it will soon be followed by others. Co-operation in this sphere will greatly add to the teaching strength of the Colleges as a whole, and is likely to promote both efficiency and economy.

I am happy to record the assistance which the University is now receiving from the re-organized Governing Bodies of the Colleges. I am told that the University representatives on the Governing Bodies, whose introduction it was thought at one time might be prejudicial to College autonomy, have proved their value ; and I may perhaps describe them not inaccurately as constituting both an

official and as unofficial link between the University and the Colleges, the unofficial aspect of their work being by no means the less important of the two. College constitutional problems are not yet solved in one or two cases, but discussions are proceeding in an amicable atmosphere and I hope a genuine desire to arrive at a sound solution, I think that if it is once realised that the University desires to assist and not to dominate many difficulties will disappear.

The Bill to amend the University Act, an innocuous administrative measure, in the course of its passage through the Legislature assumed suddenly and unexpectedly a political aspect, the reasons for which must be left to the politicians to explain, for I am myself unable to do so. But though the passage of the Bill was long and sometimes stormy, it reached port at last; and on the whole the alterations which it made in our constitutional arrangements have been welcome. To make the Executive Council and not the court the judge whether a college should be recognised or have its recognition taken away, did no more than correct a misinterpretation of the language of the original act, since clearly recognition or derecognition is an executive and not a legislative function though the conditions in which the function is to be exercised may properly be defined by the legislative body. The addition of two women members to the Executive Council as well as of a Professor, to represent the professorial body, will strengthen the Council; and I think the same may be said of the additions of the Academic Council. The power taken to appoint a whole-time and salaried Vice-Chancellor excited at first some criticism; but it has become clear that the growth of University business, to which I can myself testify, must soon make it impossible to the duties of the post to be performed during the scanty leisure of a professional or business man. These provisions, however, will only apply to those who come after me; and I am happy that my release from judicial duties has given me more time and greater opportunities for serving the University.

The Three-Year Degree Course is launched, for good or ill; and re-organisation of Higher Secondary Education in Delhi under the Higher Secondary Board proceeds apace. That the three-year degree course will become the norm one day in Indian Universities I cannot doubt; but whether it will be sooner or later I will not prophesy. It is a satisfaction to see that Mr. John Sargent's great scheme for the post-war re-construction of education assumes the general acceptance of a three-year course; and it refers also in one passage to the "interesting experiment" which has been undertaken at Delhi University. We acknowledge with gratitude the help which we have received from the Educational Adviser and we hope to justify the encouragement which he has constantly given us. His scheme contains far reaching proposals with regard to Indian Universities, none of which, if adopted, will be found inconsistent with the development policy which we in Delhi are now seeking to put into effect.

The three Principalships which were so long vacant have now been filled, one from within the University, two from outside. Mr. Gurmukh Nihal Singh and Miss Ranga Rao have neither of them undertaken an easy task but the high reputation which they have brought to Delhi is a guarantee of successful results. Apart from this, College history has been without any very striking incidents during the year. Ramjas College has made a second move since its eviction by *force majeure* from its original home and is now a sojourner (though we hope only a temporary one) in Daryaganj, not far from the Commercial College. It has not yet, I understand, lost hope of recovering the compensation due to it for its eviction. One notable event must be recorded: Mr. Nirmal Mukarji, a student of St. Stephen's and a son of the Principal of the College, was placed first this year in the I.C.S. Examination; a success which has given no less pleasure to the University than it must have done to his College, his parents and himself.

So much for the past and the present; what of the future? The plans of the University have been greatly affected by the War; but that is a misfortune which we share with most institutions, though in India places of education have not suffered at all in comparison with those in Europe, where Nazi barbarism has done its best to extinguish the lamps of learning altogether. In Delhi we lament buildings still unbuilt rather than buildings destroyed; for I cannot doubt that but for the war the other four Colleges of the University would by this time have followed the example of St. Stephen's and transplanted themselves to the University site. The Hindu College has indeed made an attempt to do so, but a series of disastrous accidents has stood in the way of further progress. It requires no great effort of imagination to picture the immense change which the building of this group of Colleges in the immediate neighbourhood of the University would have wrought,

The University of our dreams would begin to take shape ; a true University life would become possible for all its students ; and the moral and intellectual force which the University as a whole might exercise and which is now dissipated by the dispersion of its constituent elements would be augmented tenfold. This prospect is of course postponed and not lost to us for ever, but it is hard to lose even for the time being something which we had so ardently desired. And here I should like to say that only within the last few weeks the Government of India have approved the new and wider boundaries of the University enclave, proposals for which we submitted to them a year or more ago. Much of the land within the new enclave is and will remain in military occupation for the duration of the War ; but we shall now have ample room for future expansion one day. New and more generous sites are also available for the Colleges ; and there is provision for new Colleges too. And perhaps I might be permitted to make this suggestion : if a College cannot during the War build on its new site, owing to difficulties in obtaining labour or materials, why cannot it at least proceed to level and lay out the ground and plant its trees and shrubberies against the day of human occupation ? Then when the time comes to build, teachers and students will find the trees already growing which are to surround and shelter their College and add still further to the beauty of the University area. I believe that the authorities of one or two Colleges have such an idea in mind ; and I hope that they will translate it into reality.

If however building must temporarily come to an end, with it must go hopes of a new Medical School for men to be the counterpart of our latest-joined College, the Lady Hardinge Medical College for Women which has just paid us the compliment of seeking affiliation with the University ; hopes of a Training School for teachers, one of the greatest needs of this part of India hopes of new Science Laboratories for biology and its kindred sciences ; hope indeed of every kind which requires buildings for its fulfilment. But, if we had the means, we could increase our professorial Chairs, war or no war ; though perhaps I should add this qualification, that they must be Chairs on the Arts side, where professors do not require the space and apparatus which their scientific brethren demand. Perhaps some beneficent spirit, appreciating what we have done and seeking to encourage us to further effort, may make these things possible, like the Jinns of the Thousand and One Nights ; or perhaps the beneficent spirit may assume a more human shape and desire to put some part of a superfluity of wealth to useful purposes ; we shall welcome either.

I hope however, that whether the time be difficult or prosperous we shall never abandon the principles which underlie the whole of our reorganisation and development schemes. Let me remind you one of them. We do not seek to rival or compete with other and more ancient Universities, but rather to develop an atmosphere, a habit of mind, a tradition—call it what you will—of our own. We would like to aim at quality rather than quantity ; to make perfect within a narrower range, so far as human frailty permits, rather than to be content with lower standards over a wider field. We are conscious of our youth, perhaps also of our want of experience ; but we shall grow up and we are willing to learn, and we hope that as we have neither provincial nor communal affiliations we may be able to serve India as a whole. Above all, we shall strive to live up to the ideals and standards which we have set before ourselves and to give of our best. This may not be a programme in the ordinary sense ; but it will serve as a guide. Nevertheless, since it is necessary to mark out the path some way ahead in order to be able to see clearly where we are going, the Executive and Academic Councils have recently appointed two Committees, one for Science and one for Arts, which have been asked to advise what, if anything, still remains to be done in order to round off, as it were, that stage of development which the University has now reached ; and secondly, to suggest a development policy for the next ten or twelve years. The extent to which the advice and suggestions of these Committees can be acted upon must naturally depend upon the financial resources which will be at our disposal ; but it is one thing to ask for a blank cheque to be expended none can at the moment say how, and quite another to ask for money to carry out a complete and well-designed plan, the merits of which an intending donor can examine at his leisure and satisfy himself of its feasibility and value.

We can however already look back with satisfaction on certain things accomplished ; the Three-Years Degree Course, standard conditions of service and security of tenure for College teachers, model constitutions for Governing Bodies, with

University and staff representation, a beginning made with co-operative teaching, a completely re-organized Science school, new Chairs of Physics and Economics and a new Chair, shortly to be filled, of Law. All these things were worth doing; but we shall do well to remember the words used by the poet of that Roman statesman who 'thought nothing done while aught remained to do'. There is no finality in the history of a University, and the achievement of one generation does no more than lay the foundation on which the next may build. Let us then try so to serve our own generation that we may increase true knowledge and learning, and that we may teach the young men committed to our care in this University wisdom and understanding and the love of God.

The Aligarh Muslim University Convocation

The following are extracts from the Convocation Address delivered by *Sir M. Azizul Huque, D. Litt., C.I.E.* at Aligarh on the 22nd December 1943 :—

POLITICAL CHOICE OF THE MUSLIMS

I do not wish to enter into the arena of politics this morning. But speaking only as a student of politics, no one can fail to recognize the fact that the Muslims of India are today united in their demands of their political self-determination, in free choice of their own future. The Muslims of India have made their choice with no mental reservation or diplomatic ambiguity in their declarations. And every student of politics or history must frankly admit that the political choice of the Mussalmans of India today is the inevitable logic of the past years. Right from the days of December, 1906, when the League was organized, the Muslim community made it clear over and over again and in quite unequivocal manner that they were prepared for any agreed and reasonable settlement of India's political problems. From 1907 to 1943 is not a short span of human history. Any student of politics will easily find out that all efforts at conciliation, compromise, and settlement have failed during these years. The genuine views of the Muslims were far too often represented as anti-national, parochial or communal; the principle of "the Government of the People and for the People" was far too often denied in fact to the Muslims on pleas of text-book maxims or of political doctrines of the western democracy. Rarely was there a frank recognition of the realities of India's political, social or economic life; political issues and problems were discussed more on political mysticism than on an analysis of the political realities. The inexorable logic of facts has therefore been just as it was expected to be in such circumstances, viz, that the Muslim community lost its faith in more adjustments or on safe-guards and has evolved a plan for the political reconstruction of India. It is not for me to discuss the issues of this reconstruction. My purpose is only to place before you the fact that you, the coming generation, who will tomorrow have to shape the political future of the community will find your task much harder than we have had in our own times.

MODERN EDUCATION

And here let me leave the political field and look to the domain of education and on purely academic back-ground. For near about a century the present system of education has been in vogue in this country. Schools and colleges have been started all over India ever since the days when Macaulay wrote his famous minute and the universities were established in India. The range of studies became gradually wider and wider and teaching more expensive and extensive. A large educated community grew up which supplied India for generations in increasing numbers with the personnel for its administration, its learned and humble professions, its business and industry and social and political leadership. With men have come forward women to participate in the benefits and advantages of higher education; with classes have come the masses flocking in larger and larger numbers to join educational institutions. In fact, education even as it is, has for long been considered a matter of paramount importance by all classes and communities in India.

ITS DISINTEGRATING INFLUENCE

But it has to be frankly admitted that the present system of education with all its value and contributions to the economic, political and social life of India,

has a disintegrating influence on the culture and social order of the Mussalmans. I do not wish to convey for a moment that this was in any way deliberately designed or planned, or that the measures that were sponsored for the spread of education in this country were not taken with the best of intentions. But such is human history that our best intentions go wrong, our fondest wishes are scarce fulfilled, our calculated plans are often frustrated by the freaks and frowns that come in their train and in course of events we have to pay some penalty for some gain. This disintegrating influence on the culture and social order of the Mussalmans will be realised when one looks into the history and development of the Indian languages during the last hundred years. I am not here referring to the deliberate attempts that were made from time to time to create a new language or to the passionate zeal of those who had been attempting for some years past to transform the Urdu language. I refer to the entire pattern and form of Indian languages as evolved in the last hundred years. A critical study of the curriculum of educational institutions, the text-books and themes, their subjects and syllabuses, will also bear out my contention. I do not certainly wish to mean that this has been so in subjects like science or medicine or engineering or mathematics. I mainly refer to subjects like history, literature, philosophy etc.

HISTORY AS TAUGHT

A student in a Secondary School reads history. He reads ancient India in a picture of its inspiration and its ideals. Even within the short compass of a school text-book he knows India's civilization in the Vedic age, the evolution of ancient Indian civilization, the days of Maghadan imperialism and Maurya Empire. He studies or knows at least an outline of ancient society and social organization, art, architecture and literature, economic principles, and philosophy of ancient India.

Coming to the mediæval period he falls immediately into a narration of wars and conquests, of slaughter and carnage, of destruction and demolition of India's past. Let me place here a summary of this mediæval perspective from a book prescribed for the Matriculation examination of an Indian University. It has been taken almost word for word except for the verb, mood, tense and voice changed here and there.

"The teaching of Muhammad centered round the dictum, 'there is no god but God and Muhammad is his Prophet'; before he died practically the whole of Arabia was brought under his control due to his considerable military and administrative ability. The success of the army of Islam is one of the miracles of world's history, but this success was less striking when it came into conflict with the people of India who lived under simpler and healthier conditions of society, religion and administration. *Sultan Mahmud* organised the Turkish bands, and pillaged, burned and devastated the rich plains, cities and temples of the Indus and the Ganges Valleys. *Sultan Balban* was a terrible tyrant. *Jalaluddin Feroz Khilji* was always averse to the slaughter of fellow Muslims for religious reasons, but had lenity towards Thugs, organised bands of criminals whose religion was robbery and murder. *Alauddin* dreamt of surpassing Alexander by conquering the whole habitable world; his treachery, cruelty and vanity, treatment of the Hindus with great severity reducing them to a state of abject poverty mixed with his considerable ability and capacity for civil administration. *Muhammed Bin Tughlak* is an enigma in Indian history, with vanity, lack of judgment, revolting cruelty, traces of incipient lunacy and yet a military leader. *Feroz Shah Tughlak* was a kind and merciful ruler, but his connivance at corruption and his culpable leniency destroyed the effects of his own acts; his benevolence extended only to his own coreligionists and his fanaticism resulted in persecution of the Hindus with a ruthless hand. *Sikander Lodi* was a man of military talents, but his character was sullied by relentless bigotry with his policy of wholesale destruction of Hindu temples. *Humayun* was incapable of a sustaining and continued policy, probably due to his excessive use of opium. *Jahangir* had a strange compound of tenderness and cruelty, justice and caprice, refinement and brutality, good sense and childishness; *Shahjahan* made a lavish display of gold and colours amidst agricultural and industrial classes groaning under heavy taxation." Then follows the story of *Aurangzeb*, the breaker and destroyer of everything in India—empire, art, music and temples. The picture concludes with a narration of the decaying Moghal court. No doubt all these are interspersed with mention of a few good deeds here and there; but the other brush is so deep-coloured in general outlook and perspective that nothing else catches the eye,

Let it be remembered that this is what a student in the most formative period of his life has to read in a school textbook, and this is not history.

WE MISS WHAT WE VALUE MOST

I have all along felt that inspite of the growth of higher education in this country, the Muslim students miss something which he values most. While the Muslim student of a university today may be very well grounded in general, scientific or technical subjects, he has little or no opportunity of acquainting himself with the culture of Islam, its traditions, its place in Indian history and its significance in the texture of Indian life. A blunder was made almost everywhere that a Muslim student has his only special interest in higher linguistic studies. In the organization of the university studies in India it has often been forgotten that a Muslim has also a fascinating heritage of achievements. For him also there is an empire of knowledge vast in extent and in variety, suited to his special aptitude, requiring years of devoted study and research for its full exploration.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY

Let us look round to the research activities in the universities within the last thirty years. There have been extensive contributions to the study of the Vedic, epic and Puranic periods of Indian culture. There have been critical studies—literary, philosophical, religious and social—studies in the history and geography of ancient India, in architecture and fine arts, in the political, social and economic life of religious and philosophical thought in ancient India, in ancient astronomy, mathematics, philosophy and literature, in history, epigraphy, and travels, in art and iconography.

MUSLIM HISTORICAL RESEARCHES

But it cannot be said that much has been done as regards the enduring contributions of Islam to the history of India, to its civilization and culture, and to the social, political and economic life of the country. How little has been done and how much more ought to have been done? We still hear from learned scholars the reiteration of the myth that Islam came to propagate with sword. Who has told the full tales of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chisty settling in the foothills of the Aravalli ranges amidst the warrior tribes of Rajputana with no strength of the kings and monarchs behind him, or of *Hazrat Shah Jalal* similarly settling in the forests of Assam or of hundreds of other saints and savants with no earthly possession, with no symbol of military authority or power, scattered over the hills, mountains and forests of India? How much research has been done to show the nature of the grants made by Muslim rulers, to benefit non-Muslims and non-Muslim institutions? I am aware of the great contributions made in this respect by some distinguished scholars and historians. But even the studies that have been made so far, invaluable as they are, have not yet touched the fringe of the problem.

ISLAM IN WORLD HISTORY

Ladies and gentlemen, can we for a moment try to know the place of Islam in world history. Near about fourteen hundred years ago a man was born in the land of Arabia, a country renowned since the dawn of creation for its rugged hills and ridges, with fearful sand dunes amidst tractless deserts stretching out without break or interruption, except little patches of oases and the illusive mirage as the only relief to human eyes. Losing his father almost at his birth and his mother at the age of six, unable to read and write, the Prophet of Islam came out of the rugged cave of Mount Hira and gave a message of hope and faith to mankind.

Nearly fourteen hundred years have rolled by; men and minds, countries, races and cultures have changed, rechanged and reoriented in this long span of human history. Yet, the fundamental frame-work of the faith he preached and the code of conduct he promulgated, remain the same living force today as it was these many centuries past. At a time when every country in the world looked upon others as barbarians, he raised the ideal of the commonwealth of humanity and brotherhood of men. He condemned in unequivocal terms usury in any form as a great curse to human society. He devised marriage laws suiting all stages of social development, and inheritance laws, the most equitable ever promulgated in human society. He desired every Mussalman to meet at least once in the world congregation of the Haj, testifying to the value and need of world congresses and conferences. From its very inception Islam has been a great democratising process. Centuries back when it was unknown to contemporary world thought, Islam proclaimed to the world the overwhelming sanctity of the principles of equality. Dignity of manual labour was recognised and serfdom broken in all countries to

which Islam came. Human rights as such were recognised, and the status of women received the first modern recognition. And all these were effected without the authority of the State or the intervention of any legal sanction.

CULTURE OF ISLAM

Within the shortest period known in human history, a new social order was brought into the world. Isolated countries, peoples of multiple stocks and languages were not merely linked to a common faith, but were welded together in an ideal of a commonwealth with common social conduct, ethical outlook and intellectual tendencies. Islam introduced all to one common brotherhood and reduced the internal structures of warring communities. Races with varying character and outlook were brought into a uniform pattern with no survival of pre-existing usages. Under Islam the separate strata disappeared and even the characteristic fossils were crushed out of recognition giving place to a solid mass of law and traditions. The best in the past was mobilised. Aristotle, Socrates and Patanjali, Lilavati and Euclid, were brought out before the world from their hidden places. One of the characteristic influences of Islam has been that it invariably fertilised the land through which it passed and conveyed the rich treasures of one to the other along its course. Almost everywhere the indigenous cultures of the countries received a new life. A new synthesis was evolved from which arose modern arts and philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and mechanics, medicine and science. The faith which brightened the face of the earth in a dark period of human history from the banks of the Tagus and Guadalquivir to the shores of the Pacific, reflected the light of its glory on the water of the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates and spread out its treasures in the plains of the Ganges and the Hoang Ho, is the faith of Islam. The outlook, attitude and tendencies, moral and intellectual, which animated the followers of that faith had their concrete expressions in many spheres of human activities, political, social and economic and is known as the culture of Islam.

ISLAMIC STUDIES

For nearly fourteen hundred years the motif of that culture has centered round the faith of Islam. While it has vitalised, revived and renovated other cultures, the culture of Islam has never lost its individuality nor allowed itself to be submerged at any time. Modern civilisation has not yet succeeded in bringing any fresh humanistic outlook, while behind the history of the modern world and its evolution lie the rich contributions of Islam. Bringing about a harmony between the cravings of the inner soul and the needs of the outer life, its outlook has always been eminently practical and its ideal humanly attainable; never exclusive in character, it broke up the barriers of isolation, and brought together the East and West in a new conception of commonwealth. The Islam has thus been one of the greatest movements in world history; with multiple influences on political, economic and social life of vast territories. Its evolution and progress, its growth and expansion, its influence on the countries and cultures of Asia, Europe and Africa, are subjects of enthralling interest to the student of humanity and are undoubtedly of great value in appraising world history and world tendencies.

PRE-ISLAMIC INDIA

Let us visualise the condition of India prior to the advent of the Mussalmans. Human rights were determined through accident of birth and parentage; study of religious books was banned except to the privileged classes, with severe laws forged to support the disabilities of others. For a time Buddhism stemmed the tide; but soon began the bitter struggle for supremacy between Buddhism and Hinduism. For a short period Buddhism carried everything before it but soon had to take shelter beyond the confines of India, while in the wake of this struggle for supremacy came the further rigours of the social laws.

MUSLIMS IN INDIAN HISTORY

In the welter of many small states, divided against the other, with people more hopelessly divided among themselves, came the Mussalmans with their teachings of brotherhood and fellowship. By a divine coincidence in history, the first dynasty of Muslims that ruled was the slave dynasty, and the first king of Delhi was a slave himself, to underline that in the commonwealth of Islam, even a slave has the fullest rights of a man and can be a king. Thereafter the most important branch of a race which had spread devastating destruction through a large part of Asia and Europe embraced Islam and came to rule in India; and the same rude nomad, brutal race through the softening and civilising influence of Islam became the greatest administrators, and the greatest patrons of arts

and letters. Let us at least remember in appraising Muslim rule in India that it was an age when steam was not discovered and that Galileo was under menace of torture and inquisition while Tajmahal was being built in this country.

The Musalmans coming to this country named the land of their conquest "Hindustan". The centres of their administration were in Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, Lucknow, Gujrat, Khandesh, Gaur, and numerous other places—yet Muslims remained only a minority in these places.

Under the aegis of the Muslim kings and rulers began a new synthesis in intellectual and social life of India. In its train came the rise and development of arts and literature, mathematics and medicine, architecture and engineering. Roads, Bridges and irrigation canals were constructed; industry, trade and commerce flourished and provincial barriers were broken down. While evolving a common language for India as a whole they encouraged the growth of Indian languages. The entire administration, judicial and revenue, was organised on a planned basis. Maktaba and Madrassahs were established and thrown open to all classes and creeds. The sacred literatures of the Hindus, the ancient scientific and literary treasures of India, were translated. In the organisation of Government machinery, there was no distinction of caste or creed. Highest military commands were in the hands of the Hindus; jagirs and endowments were given to mosques as well as to temples; men of letters of all communities were equally patronised.

STUDY OF ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE

Ladies and gentlemen, I have said all these only to plead for much greater attention to the study of Islamic history and culture, not as a subsidiary subject, but as a subject of its own. The history of Islam is inseparably connected with the history of the world, and Islam represents a distinct contribution to world culture and civilization. As a well-known author says, "the leading motives in the history of European politics and culture cannot be properly understood without a minute study of Islamic history." This is still more true of Indian history. The study of Islamic history and culture is a vast study covering a period of the last fourteen centuries, ranging over territories larger than any empire in existence, comprising, among others, the study of history, sociology, economics and politics.

It should be the primary aim of such studies to break through the barrier of ignorance and misrepresentation which was accumulated in the past and to present Islam in its true perspective. With my feelings about the present day education in India as I have discussed before, I look up to this University to take up this great task. To you, the graduates alumni of this University, I am aware of the measures in some of the other Universities of India. It was my privilege to have a department of Islamic history and culture established in the University of Calcutta when I was Vice Chancellor, and that University has to-day a full-fledged Department conferring degrees and fostering researches on the subject of Islamic history and culture. But much more has to be done. The Muslim history of India is more misunderstood than understood. What is generally known is too often a little anatomy and no physiology or history. And in this case we suffer as much from some scholars of eminence as from persons who claim to speak with some authority. Where India received a new consciousness in her political life, where India had a new era of economic prosperity and cultural development, where India has brought under trade and commercial relationship with the world outside, Muslim history of India has been depicted as mere episodes of bloody battles and iconoclastic destruction. In the report of the Kamal Yar Jung Education Committee, we therefore strongly emphasised the need of a Central Islamic Research Organization in India, and I do hope Aligarh will take up the question with utmost zeal and devotion, as also the other important question of co-ordinating the work of oriental scholarship with advanced studies and researches.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

Graduates of the University, there is another very important problem which you and the University will have very soon to take up. Post-war India will need much more extensive and intensive scientific and industrial researches than what exist to-day. The war has created new demands. New industries have been started all over India and we are looking forward to the post-war world for much greater expansion of industries in this country. Our raw materials and resources will have to be utilised within the country as much as possible, and an active and well-directed scientific and technological research is the very basis of all industrial ex-

pansion in the modern world. Science will have to be applied increasingly to ensure the best use of and to get the maximum yield from our soil, forests, fisheries and mines and to make adequate provisions for the maintenance of health, including prevention and cure of diseases. We have to increase our food production and our nutrition must rise much higher than what is to-day. All these will demand a special degree of scientific and technical training with considerable expansion of scientific researches. No planning, no new world order, no reorganization or development of industry, power or supply is possible to-day without the help of science. No one can deny that there is enough native talent in our country. The brush and the chisel, the craftsmen, the stonecutters, the painters, the architects, the engravers and the builders of this country have for centuries produced materials, articles and structures of which any country can well be proud. The technique, the hands and the brains that have left behind them the frescoes and sculptures of Ajanta and Ellora, constructed the Taj Mahal, Moti Masjid, Qutab Minar, the Juma Masjid, forts, tombs, mosques and temples scattered over this land, produced the magnificent arts and crafts of India, forged the massive pillars, guns and cannons, or executed irrigation canals with masonry weirs and catchment basins, are still there, but moribund and lifeless, and can again be revitalized with modern scientific and technical training. There is necessity for India as a whole to take up this work and for a university like that of Aligarh this should be immediately taken up. Even if all universities and research institutions take it up on an extensive scale, there will still remain the need of a university like this to take up the work in the interests of the Mussalmans of India as a whole. Hitherto the share of the Mussalmans in scientific research, in industry, commercial enterprise, banking, and trade has been insignificantly small and we must accelerate our pace. We have to provide fullest facilities for science training and researches for the muslim students. The late Sir Syed realised its utmost importance even in the early sixties of the last century. It was in 1863 at Ghazipur that he developed his plan of establishing a literary and scientific society. As he expressed himself, "Philosophy will be in our right hand, natural sciences in our left and the crown of religion will adorn our heads." Even before this college was started, he had started a scientific society at Aligarh. How much more is the need for scientific studies and researches, pure and applied for the Muslims to-day? In connection with an enquiry into the position of Muslim education in India, I found that university laboratories almost everywhere in India have not enough space and accommodation for all who want admission, and this specially hits the Mussalman students who do not get sufficient opportunities for scientific, industrial or technical training. Apart from those who will come to Aligarh for its own sake, others who will fail to get any accommodation within their provinces or states must necessarily look to Aligarh as the place where they can come for such training. If India has to progress industrially, it will require a much greater number of technical personnel, fully and adequately trained for such purposes. Let not the story be told again that the Muslims have been left behind in the absence of adequate training facilities. Let us take time by the forelock and make arrangements for the training of a large number of Mussalmans for the technical personnel of Industries. This University like almost every other will have to expand much more to organise applied and pure researches in multiple branches. I hope we shall not, as soon as the war is over, return to our pre-war ideas and leave things to slide on. I hope we shall not be told that in the exigencies of war conditions it is not possible to make any start for an expensive scheme like this. History repeatedly records that in the midst of great tragedies foundations have also been laid of the greatest triumphs of human history. War always assures a nation of its having resources and capacities of which it had never dreamt before. The lessons of war and industrial struggle have repeatedly told us that nothing pays so well as knowledge and that new knowledge always pays in the long run. And in this matter it has been found that maintaining a steady flow of men engaged in continuous researches and competent to extend the domain of theoretical and practical knowledge, paying them well for doing it and taking the chances of getting one valuable practical discovery out of scores which may not count at all is a better investment in the long run than the return of immediate dividends or the calculation of quantitative outturn in an educational institution. Science and scientific discoveries not only affect the life conditions of the human race but also enable them to live better and healthier life. It has made the colossal development of modern industry possible.

मसुरी
MUSSOORIE.

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